

Apostolic Succession in the Porvoo Common Statement

Unity through a deeper sense of apostolicity

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Abstract

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A number of ecumenical dialogues have identified apostolic succession as one of the most crucial issues on which the churches need to find a joint understanding in order to achieve the unity of the Church.

When the Porvoo Common Statement (PCS) was published in 1993, it was regarded by some as an ecumenical breakthrough, because it claimed to have established visible and corporate unity between the Lutheran and Anglican churches of the Nordic-Baltic-British-Irish region through a joint understanding of ecclesiology and apostolic succession. The consensus has been achieved, according to the PCS, through a 'deeper understanding' that embraces the churches' earlier diverse interpretations. In the international debate about the PCS, the claim of a 'deeper understanding' as a solution to earlier contradictory interpretations has been both praised and criticised, and has been seen as both possible and impossible.

This thesis investigates how and why the PCS has been interpreted differently in various contexts, and discerns the arguments used for or against the ecclesiology presented in the PCS. Those arguments are then analysed historically and theologically in order to develop further the comprehension of the 'deeper understanding' presented in the PCS and, if possible, to develop the ecclesiology and the notion of apostolic succession described in the PCS.

Finally, this study investigates how the PCS has been implemented in the churches that have signed the Porvoo Declaration and in the Porvoo Communion as a whole.

Keywords: Apostolicity, apostolic succession, episcopal succession, episcopate, Porvoo Common Statement, episcopacy, ecclesiology, ecumenism, substantive apostolicity, successio, traditio, communio, koinonia, ecumenical method

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We believe the successors of the apostles only in so far as they tell us those things which the apostles and prophets have left in their writings.
Thomas Aquinas (De veritate, q. 14 a. 10 ad 11)

When Christ sent his apostles, in whose place there are now bishops and priests, he said: 'Go and preach the Gospel for all nations'. ... Now bishops and priests have entered their office to preach the word and will of God in the same mission.
Olaus Petri (Een christelighen formaning til clerkerijt, p355)

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Abbreviations

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| ACC | The Anglican Consultative Council. |
| ALERC | Anglican-Lutheran European Regional Commission. |
| ALIC | Anglican-Lutheran International Commission. |
| ALICC | Anglican-Lutheran International Continue Commission, later changed to Anglican-Lutheran International Commission |
| Apology | Apology to the Augsburg Confession, by Philipp Melanchthon. |
| ARCIC | Anglican – Roman Catholic International Commission. |
| BEM | The Faith & Order Lima Report – Baptism, Eucharist Ministry, 1982. |
| CA | Confessio Augustana or the Augsburg Confession. The primary Evangelic-Lutheran confession text. It was presented by the Evangelic party at the Diet of Augsburg on 25 June 1530 in order to explain the true catholic faith and preserve the Church's unity. Written by Philipp Melanchthon. |
| CCM | Called to Common Mission – Porvoo's equivalent in the USA. Agreement between the Episcopal church of America and the ELCA. Though there are similarities the preconditions are different with importance for the agreements content. The CCM was the Lutheran Proposal for a Revision of the original Concordat of Agreement. The CCM was adopted by the ELCA 1999 and by the Episcopal Church 2000. |
| CCU | (Church of England's) Council for Christian Unity. |
| CEC | Conference of European Churches. |
| CIC 1917 | Codex Iuris Canonice 1917; the RC Canon Law of 1917. |
| CIR | (ELCD's) Council on International Relations. |
| CO 1571 | The Swedish Church Order from 1571 also called the Church Order 1571 of Archbishop Laurentius Petri. |
| CO 2000 | The present Church Order from 2000 for the CoS. |
| CoE | Church of England. |
| Cold Ash | Report of the Anglican –Lutheran Joint Working Group, Cold Ash 1983. |
| CoN | Church of Norway. |
| CoS | Church of Sweden. |
| CPCE | Community of Protestant Churches in Europe, i.e. churches that have approved and signed the Leuenberg Agreement. I also refer to this community as the Leuenberg Fellowship. |
| DzH | H. Denzinger and P. Hünermann (eds.) <i>Enchiridion Symbolorum, definitionum et declarationum</i> (43a edizione bilingue), Bologna 2010. |

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| EELC | Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church. |
| EKD | Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland (The Evangelical Church of Germany). |
| ELCA | Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. |
| ELCC | Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada. |
| ELCD | Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark, i.e. <i>den Danske folkekirken</i> (the Danish Folk Church). |
| ELCF | Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland. |
| ELCI | Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iceland. |
| ELCL | Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia |
| ELCLith | Evangelical Lutheran Church in Lithuania. |
| FOAG | (The Church of England's) Faith and Order Advisory Group. |
| LRCJC | Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission. |
| LRCDS | Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue Group in Sweden |
| LRCDSF | Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue Group in Sweden and Finland |
| LWF | Lutheran World Federation. |
| M | Ministry. The Ministry part of the Lima document, Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry. |
| Malta | The Lutheran-Roman Catholic Malta Report 1972. |
| MS | Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. |
| NEI | The Nordic Ecumenical Institute. |
| NER | Nordisk Ekumenisk Skriftserie (Nordic Ecumenical Journal), published by NEI. |
| PCS | The Porvoo Common Statement (including the PD). |
| PD | The Porvoo Declaration, §58 of the PCS. The Porvoo churches became a member of the Porvoo Communion through the approval of the PD, which in the §58 points back and states that the PD is based on the PCS. |
| PCPCU | (The Roman Catholic) Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. |
| Pullach | The Anglican-Lutheran Pullach Report from 1972. |
| RC | Roman Catholic |
| RCC | The Roman Catholic Church. |
| SPCK | (The English) Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. |
| USA/LRCD | The Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue in the USA. |
| VELKD | Vereinigte Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche Deutschlands (The United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany). |
| Waterloo | The Waterloo Agreement – Porvoo's equivalent in Canada and agreement between the Anglican Church in Canada and the ELCC. Waterloo is influenced by the PCS and the American <i>Concordat of agreement</i> 1991, but with different preconditions. |
| WCC | World Council of Churches. |

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Uppsala 29 June, 2017

The feast of St Peter and St Paul

Erik Eckerdal

Part I: Introduction and Background of the Porvoo Common Statement

1. Introduction

One of the great achievements of 20th century church history was the birth and growth of the ecumenical movement and its dialogue between churches of different traditions.¹ The churches rediscovered a common heritage and recognised, at least partially, the one faith of Christ in one another's life. Controversial theology was toned down in favour of a mutual search for unity in Christ.² As a result, today the churches can demonstrate a high degree of convergence that only a few decades ago was unthinkable.³ Despite the remarkable progress of the ecumenical movement, divisive issues remain between the churches,⁴ obvious to anyone who contemplates the almost innumerable denominations defining themselves as 'Christian'.⁵ One of these dividing issues is the understanding of the church's apostolicity and of apostolic succession, and how *episcopé* and episcopacy are understood. A number of ecumenical documents have identified these themes as among the most crucial areas in the ecumenical movement at present.⁶ The churches confess themselves in the Nicene Creed to be apostolic, but there are divergent perceptions of the concept. The Nicene Creed makes apostolicity normative, essential, and indispensable for the churches' identity; but at the same time divergent understandings of the concept are obstacles to unity.⁷ Research in this area can help the churches in their search for the unity that is still not realised, so that they understand the reasons for their traditional understandings of apostolicity, especially in relation to the doctrines of other

¹ Fey, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement. Vol. 2, The Ecumenical Advance*.

² The World Council of Churches (WCC) describes itself as "a community of churches on the way to visible unity in one faith and one eucharistic fellowship, expressed in worship and in common life in Christ. It seeks to advance towards this unity, as Jesus prayed for his followers, 'so that the world may believe.' (John 17.21)", <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/about-us> (2014-09-15).

³ E.g. Kasper, *Harvesting the Fruits*.

⁴ E.g. Maffei, *Il ministero nella Chiesa*.

⁵ E.g. Jenkins, *The Next Christendom*.

⁶ E.g. Faith & Order, *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982-1990*, p128. The Commission states: "For many on both sides of the issue the question of episcopal succession remains the most difficult problem for further dialogue on ministry. Behind this issue lie significant ecclesiological questions. It can, therefore, only be tackled in the framework of a broader, more intensified discussion on ecclesiology in the Faith & Order." See also: LRCJC, 'The Ministry in the Church (1981)', p266, §59. "The most important problem, about the theology of the bishop's office and the question about mutual recognition of the office, is the apostolic succession".

⁷ E.g. O'Gara, 'Apostolicity in Ecumenical Dialogue', p175ff.

church traditions and the ecumenical movement. The great need for further research on apostolic succession is the reason I have chosen this theme as the object of my investigation.

Historically, the perceptions of and emphasis on apostolicity, succession, and episcopacy have not been constant, but have varied among the churches.⁸ Apostolic succession has not always been a decisive issue between the Anglican and Lutheran traditions.⁹ The explicitly expressed requirement of the apostolic succession of bishops in the Church of England (CoE) was formulated relatively late, in 1662.¹⁰ Before the formulation of the Porvoo Common Statement (PCS)¹¹ and the establishment of the Porvoo Communion,¹² the main obstacle to the unity of the Northern European Anglican and Lutheran churches was, as the PCS describes it, the “long-standing problem about episcopal ministry and its relation to succession”.¹³ In order to deal with this remaining problem and “move forward” from “existing piecemeal agreements towards the goal of visible unity”,¹⁴ the PCS focuses foremost on the apostolicity of the church and its relation to episcopal succession.

In the PCS, the Anglican and Lutheran churches in Northern Europe claim to have overcome their divisive interpretations of apostolic succession, and have brought about the *visible unity* of the churches concerned.¹⁵ The Porvoo Communion consists of churches that previously were churches with both ‘preserved’ and ‘not preserved’ succession of bishops. Traditionally, the Porvoo churches represent three different approaches to episcopal succession: those who considered episcopal succession to be necessary for the true church (Anglican);¹⁶ those who regarded it as a gift from God, but as not strictly necessary for the unity of the church (Eastern-Nordic); and those

⁸ See the historical essays in *Together in Mission and Ministry*.

⁹ See chapter 2 for the historical background to the PCS.

¹⁰ Norris Jr., ‘Episcopacy’, p342; Hagberg, *Jacob Serenius kyrkliga insats*, p179, 216. The Swedish bishop of Strängnäs, Jacob Serenius (1763-1776), emphasised the episcopal succession in defence of the rights of the bishop.

¹¹ The Porvoo Common Statement will henceforth be abbreviated as PCS. The Porvoo churches joined the Porvoo Communion through approving and subscribing to the Porvoo Declaration (PD). However, §58 states that the PD is based on the PCS as a whole. By ‘Porvoo churches’ I refer to those churches that originally participated in the Porvoo Conversations and its work (1989-1993), which produced the PCS, and those four churches that later have joined the Porvoo Communion.

¹² The Porvoo Communion was established “as soon as one of the Anglican churches and one of the Lutheran churches ... approved the Declaration”, see PCS Foreword §11.

¹³ PCS §22.

¹⁴ PCS Foreword §6. See also Hill, ‘Existing Agreements’, 53ff.

¹⁵ The original 12 Porvoo churches were: Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark (ELCD), Church of Norway (CoN), Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland (ELCI), Church of Sweden (CoS), Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF), Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (EELC), Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL), Evangelical Lutheran Church of Lithuania (ELCLith), Church of England (CoE), Church in Wales, Church of Ireland and the Scottish Episcopal Church.

¹⁶ Formulated in the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral; Butler, ‘From the Early Eighteenth Century’, p42, 46ff.

who regarded episcopal succession as non-essential (Western-Nordic). The Nordic approaches were related to the issue of *satis est* and *nec necesse est* in clause 7 of the *Augsburg Confession* (CA 7),¹⁷ which states that:

It is enough for the true unity of the church to agree concerning the teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. It is not necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies, instituted by human beings be alike everywhere.

The Western-Nordic churches have traditionally understood that episcopacy is not one of the requirements for the church's unity. The Eastern-Nordic approach has interpreted CA 7 differently: they have regarded episcopacy in succession as a gift of God and as necessary in the CoS and the ELCF, but not as strictly necessary for other churches or for the unity of the church.¹⁸ Like the Eastern-Nordic churches, all three Baltic churches already had bishops in succession, though it is possible to find both Eastern- and Western-Nordic understandings of episcopacy in those churches.¹⁹

Through their approval of the Porvoo Declaration (PD),²⁰ the Porvoo churches claim to have overcome the divisions among those churches, and the churches declare together that “in the light of all this [i.e. the PCS as a whole] we find that the time has come when all our churches can affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession.”²¹ In the Porvoo Declaration (PD), the Porvoo churches also declare that “we commit ourselves: (vi) to invite one another's bishops normally to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church”.²² Through mutual participation in the laying on of hands at bishops' ordinations, the visible unity of the Porvoo churches, established through the approval of the PD, is realised.²³

The PCS does not claim to offer a solution for all churches regarding their differences over apostolic succession, but only for Lutheran and Anglican churches involved in the Porvoo process, due to their specific history, identity, and circumstances.²⁴ Neither does the PCS claim to have solved all remaining issues between the Porvoo churches; but through the communion

¹⁷ Melancthon, ‘Confessio Augustana’ (The Augsburg Confession). The primary Evangelical-Lutheran confession text. It was written by Philipp Melancthon and presented by the Evangelical party at the Diet of Augsburg on 25 June 1530 in order to explain the true catholic faith and preserve the Church's unity.

¹⁸ CoS, the Bishops' Conference, ‘To the Conference of Bishops in the Anglican Communion’. I discuss this further in Part III of the thesis.

¹⁹ Tiit Pädam, ‘Bishops in Our Churches – Estonia’, Ringolds Muziks, ‘Bishops in Our Churches – Latvia’ and Aldonis Putce, ‘Bishops in Our Churches – Lithuania’; all three in *Together in Mission and Ministry*, p109ff.

²⁰ The Porvoo Declaration, henceforth the PD, consists of section 58 of the PCS.

²¹ PCS §57, with reference to chapter IV D.

²² PCS/PD §58 b(vi).

²³ PCS §32j, 57, 58 b(vi).

²⁴ PCS §8.

that has been established the churches are obliged “to face and overcome the remaining obstacles to still closer communion”.²⁵ This means that some questions are not finally solved in the PCS; but they are not regarded as church dividing. There are, for example, different pastoral approaches to confirmation, and the Porvoo churches commit themselves, through subscribing to the PD, “to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry”.²⁶

When the PCS was published in 1993 and sent to the twelve participating churches in the dialogue, an extensive process to evaluate the document began in all the churches to discern whether it was possible to approve the PD. The processes within the churches were not identical, as all the churches have different constitutions and processes for referral and decision-making. Those differences are, in turn, anchored in the churches’ varied histories, traditions, and understandings of ecclesiology and especially of ministry. The differences among the churches concern, in one way or another, how church, order, and organisation are understood. In episcopal churches, such as those involved in the Porvoo process, episcopacy is an expression of how order and organisation are understood, and whether (and in that case, how) this order relates to apostolic succession. The constitutional differences between the Porvoo churches relate thus to how apostolic succession is understood, and played an important role in how the PCS was evaluated and received in the churches.

The PCS was also discussed by other churches and by the international community of theologians. It was described by some as an ecumenical break-through and as probably “the most important ecumenical achievement world-wide of the 1990s”.²⁷ Others criticised the PCS as inconsistent, as not being a viable theological solution, and as an example of impatient human church diplomacy.²⁸ As those contradictory evaluations demonstrate, the PCS was interpreted and evaluated in different ways. Behind those diverse interpretations were pre-understandings based on the traditional ecclesiological identities of the Porvoo churches and other churches. Those pre-understandings functioned as hermeneutical keys for the reception of the PCS, both for the churches and for the individual theologians within those churches.

²⁵ PCS §33.

²⁶ PCS §58b (vii). See also Pädam, *Ordination of Deacons*.

²⁷ Carpenter and Hastings, *Cantuar: The Archbishops in Their Office*, pXXVII; for similar evaluations of the PCS, see: Noko, ‘The General Secretary of the LWF’; Vikström, ‘The PCS from the Lutheran Point of View’, p3; Tjørhom, ‘The Porvoo Statement: A Possible Ecumenical Breakthrough?’; Thiessen, *Apostolic and Prophetic*, p39.

²⁸ Yarnold, ‘In Line with the Apostles’; Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p123. Morerod: “Is there not behind Porvoo a too human view of the unity of Christians, tainted with impatience and having recourse to procedures which have been tried out on the political plane?” Kirk, ‘Love in a Cold Climate’. “At best [the PCS is] naïve optimism and at worst downright deceit.”

The contradictory interpretations of the PCS stand in contrast to the purpose of the PCS – which is unity – and to how the Porvoo Conversations describe the PCS as a deepened understanding of apostolic succession. The two chairmen of the Porvoo Conversations, Bishop David Tustin (CoE) on behalf of the Anglican churches and Bishop Tore Furberg (CoS), representing the Lutheran churches, describe this in the *Foreword* to the PCS:

Chapter IV [in the PCS] begins by identifying... the major problem to be resolved: namely, episcopal ministry and its relation to succession. The report then breaks new ground... The sections which follow deserve close attention. In seeking to unlock our churches from limited and negative perceptions, this chapter spells out a deeper understanding of apostolicity, of the Episcopal office, and of historical succession as ‘sign’.²⁹

This quotation is more important than at first might be perceived. As I will demonstrate later, the idea about a *deeper understanding* is crucial to the method of the PCS. According to the PCS, it is this *deeper understanding* that is the precondition for the Porvoo churches’ mutual declaration that they “can affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession”,³⁰ and for the establishment of the new ecclesial communion, the Porvoo Communion. The Porvoo Conversations held that the unity of the churches is beyond,³¹ but not in contradiction to, the churches’ traditional understandings of apostolic succession, and is to be found in what they call a *deeper understanding*. In the claim to express a *deeper understanding*, the word *deeper* is related to the Porvoo churches’ previous interpretations of apostolic succession. It is those previous interpretations that the delegates claim to have overcome through the *deeper understanding* in the PCS.

The churches’ previous and divergent interpretations of apostolic succession not only represented what the PCS intended to overcome through its *deeper understanding*, but also functioned as hermeneutical bases for the churches’ reception (which will be described in due course). This means that the churches’ interpretations of the PCS were coloured by earlier doctrinal positions on apostolic succession – positions that the PCS simultaneously claims to have deepened and surmounted. For this reason not only is there a direct relationship between the PCS and the various interpretations of it, but an integral relationship also exists between both of these. The PCS claims to surmount the earlier positions by means of a deeper understanding, yet it is precisely those earlier positions that function as hermeneutical criteria for the various ways in which the PCS is interpreted. This integral relationship is a vital consideration for the method of study that I employ. By analysing

²⁹ PCS Foreword, §9.

³⁰ PCS §57.

³¹ Cf. PCS Foreword, §9, PCS §22, §57, with reference to chapter IV D.

both the interpretations of the PCS and their hermeneutical backgrounds it is possible to reach a better understanding of the PCS itself.

The PCS's claim to a *deeper understanding* applies not only to the Porvoo churches and their theologians. Since the PCS is not only based on earlier Lutheran-Anglican dialogue documents but also on Lutheran-Roman Catholic, Anglican-Roman Catholic, and multilateral documents, the PCS has significance for other church traditions as well. For example, the Roman Catholic (RC) theologian John Burkhardt describes the PCS as "a culmination to date of recent discussions regarding apostolicity inasmuch as it draws widely from earlier bilateral and multilateral statements. ... It has offered the most concentrated theological focus on apostolicity and apostolic succession, and for this reason deserves careful study."³² As indicated above, this kind of positive evaluation of the PCS was opposed by those who believed that the PCS was not viable as a theological solution to the diverse interpretations of apostolic succession.

Since there are divergent understandings of the PCS, it seems that not everyone agrees that the understanding of apostolic succession it presents should be seen as a 'deepened' view of this basic ecclesiological category. The subsequent debate, as will be demonstrated, has either agreed with or objected to the claim, using different arguments *for and against* the PCS and its solution to the longstanding dilemma. These contrasting evaluations indicate that: either the interpreters had good reason to state that the PCS does not represent a *deeper understanding*; or the various interpreters of the PCS have mis-interpreted the meaning of the *deeper understanding* construed in the PCS. Such misinterpretations of the PCS may be caused by the interpreters' confessionally-determined hermeneutical keys, which may not be appropriate for analysing the text of the PCS.

For an ecumenical agreement aiming at providing the basis for unity, it is precarious if the interpretations of it are so divergent that they indicate division rather than unity. There is, therefore, a great need to examine these divergent interpretations in order to understand their positive or negative evaluations of the PCS, and to find out how the PCS has been understood among the Porvoo churches and in other ecclesial contexts. If those divergent interpretations in fact bear witness to the particularities, strengths, and weaknesses of the various traditions involved in the PCS, they could be used as resources to evaluate and improve the understanding of the PCS, because it is precisely those earlier positions that the PCS claims to have overcome through a deeper understanding.

³² Burkhardt, *Apostolicity Then And Now*, p193; Cf. also VanderWilt, *Communion with Non-Catholic Christians*, p86f; and; Roelvink, 'The Apostolic Succession in the PCS'.

1.1. Purpose and working questions

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the PCS has been interpreted in subsequent debate and, with those interpretations as a resource, to develop the understanding of the text and, if possible, its perception of apostolic succession. The question to be researched is: *How has the PCS been interpreted, and in what way can those interpretations develop the comprehension and the content of the claimed 'deeper understanding' of apostolic succession in the PCS?*

In order to carry out my investigation, four basic questions will be used rather freely. These will be developed in relation to my *abductive* approach (which I will explain in section 1.6). 1. How and why has the PCS been interpreted in a particular way in some of the Porvoo churches and in the international Porvoo debate? 2. What arguments are used in the Porvoo debate for and against the PCS's *deeper understanding*? 3. What are the historical and theological bases for those arguments *for and against* the PCS? 4. Is it possible to develop the understanding and the claimed solution presented in the PCS?³³ Then in conclusion, based on the ecclesiology that is a result of my investigation of apostolic succession, I intend in Chapter 16 (Part IV) to highlight this ecclesiology from a particular perspective; namely the issue of *implementation*. That is, what are the practical implications of the PCS's ecclesiology for the concerned churches and how has it been implemented in the Porvoo churches and in the Porvoo Communion as a whole?

Before I return to the structure and method, I will discuss some clarifications and limitations, and introduce the research material.

1.2. Clarifications and limitations

How the various phases of the Porvoo process are to be named is important for my study. The *Porvoo process* began in 1989 when the Porvoo Conversations opened at a conference in Sigtuna, Sweden. The process is ongoing through the continued implementation of the declaration, and because new churches continue to join the communion. I suggest that the *Porvoo process* can in turn be divided into three periods:

1. The *Porvoo Conversations* took place from 1989-1992 resulting in the PCS which was published in 1993.
2. The *Porvoo debate* refers to the reception by the Porvoo churches and the international ecumenical community. For each individual Porvoo church, this was the period from 1993 until giving final approval of the PD. For most Porvoo churches, this period of debate ended in 1996

³³ For a description of the Porvoo solution, see chapters 1.3 and 2.2, which present the PCS.

when the declaration was signed. However, for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark it ended in 2010 when she approved the PD; and for the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia the debate is ongoing. This is also the case in the ecumenical community, where the *Porvoo debate* continued after 1996 and again after 2010, and is ongoing. Other churches in Northern Europe, in Spain, and in Portugal joined the Porvoo Communion after 1996.

3. The *Porvoo implementation* is the reception in practice of the PCS in the churches after they had approved the PD.

In my study I will, as mentioned, investigate the *Porvoo debate* and how it relates to the PCS. Where I use material from the *Porvoo Conversations* and the *Porvoo implementation*, it will be to supplement my research into the Porvoo debate and to clarify my analysis of the discussion. The three periods should not be considered as absolute: there are overlaps, and together the three periods constitute the *Porvoo process*.

The PCS includes a common declaration §58 (of only two pages) by the participating churches – the *Porvoo Declaration* (PD). The PD is based on, and depends upon, the PCS; and they must be read together. The PCS is a document written by representatives from 12 churches in Northern Europe. So far, eleven of those churches have ratified the declaration,³⁴ as have four other European churches.³⁵ The statement and the declaration together are the basis for communion between those 15 churches that are committed to each other through their approval of the declaration.

By *Porvoo theologians* I mainly have in view the Porvoo delegates – the representatives of the churches who participated in the Porvoo Conversations from 1989 to 1992. In some cases, I also include official representatives of the Porvoo churches involved in the international debate and how they explained the PCS. Because the Porvoo theologians originally wrote the PCS, their explanations of it may be regarded as a description of the original intention of the text.

In my study of the PCS, I have chosen to call Porvoo's approach to the ecumenical problem about episcopal succession 'the *Porvoo solution*'. This refers to the solution presented in the PCS to overcome the "longstanding problem" about episcopal succession between the Porvoo churches. The Norwegian theologian and Porvoo delegate Ola Tjørhom has called this ap-

³⁴ In 1996 the ELCD came to the conclusion that it was not possible to sign the PD. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia decided to procrastinate a formal decision. Both churches remained as observers but as non-members of the Porvoo Communion. While this is still the case for the ELCL, the ELCD approved the PD in 2009 and signed the PD in 2010.

³⁵ The four are the Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic Evangelical Church of Portugal (2001), the Spanish Reformed Episcopal Church (2001), the Latvian Evangelical Church Abroad (2014), and the Lutheran Church in Great Britain (2014).

proach the *Porvoo model*,³⁶ but he has also described it as a solution.³⁷ Since the claim in the PCS is that the remaining problem of succession has been overcome – that is, solved – through the churches’ approval of the Porvoo Declaration (PD), I have chosen to call this ‘the *Porvoo solution*’. This term refers particularly to PCS §52-53, which describe the freedom of the churches with episcopal succession to “acknowledge an authentic episcopal ministry in a church which has preserved continuity in the episcopal office by an occasional priestly/presbyteral ordination at the time of the Reformation” and that this acknowledgment “is theologically prior to the use of the sign of the laying on of hands in the historic succession”. The *Porvoo solution* and those paragraphs should be understood against the background of the entire PCS and its ecclesiology.

Since the PCS is a contextual agreement, the *Porvoo solution* is a contextual solution that claims to have solved the remaining issue dividing the Porvoo churches. If the Porvoo solution is applied to a wider ecumenical movement and to other contexts, it can be called the *Porvoo model*. The difference between *solution* and *model* is the context, which is integral to the Porvoo solution. Since the solution is contextual, it is not automatically transferable to other contexts. Since my study concerns the PCS, I have chosen to refer to it as ‘the Porvoo solution’. This limitation does not deny the PCS’s claims that the *deeper understanding*, which is the precondition for the Porvoo solution, could also apply to other church traditions. The ultimate goal of the PCS is the visible unity of the universal Church; but the claim to be a concrete solution for the “longstanding dilemma” is contextual, since it relates directly to the churches of the Nordic-Baltic-British-Irish region.³⁸ At the same time, the PCS is regarded as an important step towards the visible unity of the universal Church that has not yet been realised.³⁹

The *Porvoo solution*, as I use the term, is not a static concept, as if every difference between the Porvoo churches is solved through subscribing to the PD.⁴⁰ Rather, as already indicated, a forward-looking dynamic is an integral part of the Porvoo solution, which means that approval of the PD commits the churches to a process of renewal and change, and that implementation of the PCS leads towards a deepened and realised visible communion.

Since many churches are involved in Porvoo, I will restrict my investigation to three of them, referred to here as *sample churches*. I have chosen *den Danske Folkekirken* (the Danish Folk church), which in English refers to

³⁶ Cf. Tjørhom, ‘Apostolic Continuity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p134; Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p200f; Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p177.

³⁷ Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p199.

³⁸ See PCS §7, 60f. It is noteworthy that the PCS has been used in other ecumenical dialogues in Africa and in North America; see the essays of Michael Root and Sebastian Bakare in Tjørhom, *Apostolicity and Unity*.

³⁹ PCS/PD §60f.

⁴⁰ PCS §§33, 58.

itself officially as the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark (ELCD),⁴¹ the Church of Sweden (CoS), and the Church of England (CoE). This selection is useful because, before those churches approved the PD, they represented (as already described) three different approaches to episcopal succession.

From an historical and ecclesiological perspective, the choice of those three churches is well-based. The CoE represents all four Anglican churches and may, in a way, be understood as the mother church of the other Anglican churches.⁴² In 1809, when Sweden lost Finland to Russia, the dioceses of Turku (Åbo) and of Porvoo (Borgå) became the Finnish church.⁴³ This was later named the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland, and in 1817 Tsar Alexander I elevated the bishop of Turku to Archbishop of Turku and Finland. Estonia was united with Sweden in 1561, and was under Swedish rule until 1710, when Estonia was lost to Russia. During this period the bishops of the diocese of Tallinn were ordained in Sweden and installed in the Cathedral of Tallinn.⁴⁴ In the course of history, episcopal succession has been re-introduced in both the ELCD and the Baltic churches through the Swedish episcopate.⁴⁵ The ELCD represents the western Nordic tradition, with historical links to the Church of Norway (CoN) and the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Iceland (ELCI), since Denmark ruled both Norway until 1814 and Iceland until 1918, when Iceland became a sovereign state in union with Denmark and then a republic in 1944.⁴⁶

The Porvoo debate in the ELCD is important to investigate, since it was one of two churches – the other was the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia (ELCL) – which, after an extensive debate during 1994 and 1995, did not subscribe to the PD. It is therefore of interest to inquire into the arguments used in the Danish discussion of the content of the PCS from 1994 to 2010, when the ELCD chose, finally, to sign the statement. The major Porvoo debate in the ELCD means that my treatment of this discussion is broader than my investigation of the discussions in the CoS and in the CoE.

Considering the three traditions or perspectives on episcopacy and apostolic succession, it is likely that through its reception process the PCS challenged the traditions of the respective churches. The Anglican Porvoo delegate, John Arnold, noted the differences and commented in advance of the Porvoo debate:

⁴¹ The difference in the nomenclature is not without importance. In English the name is more confessional, and includes Evangelical-Lutheran, while in Danish the name refers to the church of Christ in or of Denmark, as related to the Danish people, i.e. the *Folk* of Denmark.

⁴² The Church in Wales, Church of Ireland and the Scottish Episcopal Church (although the Celtic tradition pre-dates Augustine's mission from Rome).

⁴³ The diocese of Porvoo was originally located in the Viipuri in Karelia, but moved to Porvoo in 1723 when Russia annexed the eastern part of the Swedish-Finnish nation.

⁴⁴ Pädam, 'Estonia', p111.

⁴⁵ E.g. *ibid.*, p111f; Part IV, Appendix.

⁴⁶ Hugason, 'Iceland', p101.

My guess is that this [the PCS and its view of episcopal succession] raises no problem for the churches of Sweden, Finland and the Baltic States. There will be a challenge to the Anglicans to accept this view of the apostolic succession and to waive the requirement which has been in force since 1662 that no-one may exercise any ministry in our churches unless they have been ordained by bishops in the apostolic succession in the narrow meaning of the term. It will be for the Churches of Denmark, Norway and Iceland to face the challenge of their own catholicity, of their willingness to be part of a greater whole, and the appropriateness of resuming the sign of historic episcopal succession as a means of doing so.⁴⁷

A consequence of my limiting this study to three sample churches is that I shall not analyse the Porvoo process in any of the three Baltic Churches, of whom the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Latvia for the time being did not subscribe. This will not be seen as a statement against those churches; rather, through limiting the study to three sample churches I have narrowed the scope, while still conducting an investigation with relevance for all Porvoo churches. It is also due to my own linguistic limitation, since I unfortunately do not read any of the Baltic languages.⁴⁸

A related question might be why I have chosen to investigate the critiques of theologians from churches other than the Porvoo churches, such as Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Lutheran, and Reformed churches. Those contexts have been essential to investigate in order to undertake a broader examination of the Porvoo debate. Both within and beyond the Porvoo churches, the Porvoo debate has primarily been about basic ecclesiological issues that have been divisive since the Reformation. It has therefore been important also to cover those churches beyond the communion.

I will use *catholic* and *protestant* as heuristic concepts to structure the various positions in the Porvoo debate about apostolic succession and issues such as sacramentality, instrumentality, and the meaning of ordination and ordained ministry. By ‘catholic’ I do not mean Roman Catholic, since all the Porvoo Churches, as do the Orthodox churches, regard themselves, as expressed in PCS §7, “to be part of the One, Holy, Catholic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the one apostolic mission of the whole people of God”. By ‘catholic’ I refer to a basic ecclesiological understanding that sees the Church as visible and sacramental, with an emphasis on the sacraments and the ordained ministry. According to catholic understanding, the ordained ministry is integrated into the *satis est* in CA 7. The catholic understanding is *instrumental*, in contrast to a protestant *functional* view.

By ‘protestant’ I mean two different things, and the context will reveal which one applies. First, by ‘protestant’ I refer to the Lutheran, United, and

⁴⁷ Arnold, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement and Anglican-Lutheran Relationship’, p19.

⁴⁸ In contrast, the Estonian theologian and Porvoo delegate Tiit Pädam has accomplished the remarkable linguistic achievement of investigating material from all of the original 10 signatory Porvoo churches in their respective vernaculars; Pädam, *Ordination of Deacons*.

Reformed churches in Germany, Italy, France, and the USA. Secondly, by ‘protestant’ I refer to an ecclesiological understanding of ‘church’ as primarily invisible and non-sacramental. It is an understanding that interprets *satis est* reductively, and does not include the ordained ministry. This does not necessarily mean that churches in the first meaning of the concept identify themselves with the content of the second meaning of the concept.

Although it is common among Roman Catholics and the Orthodox to refer to everything outside themselves as ‘protestant’, that is problematic and inadequate for two reasons. First, ‘protestant’ is not a homogeneous concept, and there is no such thing as ‘the protestant church’, because there are numbers of protestant churches. Secondly, it is problematic in relation to both the Anglican and the Nordic-Baltic churches, which do not traditionally refer to themselves as ‘protestant’. As Matti Repo, bishop of Tampere, expresses it: “Coming from a Nordic family of Lutheran Churches with a particular history and an emphasis on the continuity of the Church, I don’t consider my church a ‘Protestant Church’.”⁴⁹ A one-sided identification of the term *catholic* with the RC and Orthodox churches becomes too vague and is ecclesologically problematic,⁵⁰ while the use of the concepts *catholic* and *protestant* makes it possible to structure the material in a way that does justice to it and to the churches under investigation. I will return to these concepts later, and clarify my use in relation to the context.

The English word *evangelical* has two different meanings in German and Swedish. It can mean both *evangelish/evangelisk*, as in the Evangelical-Lutheran churches, and *evangelikal/evangelikal*, as in the evangelical protestant movements, such as pentecostals and charismatic movements. In order to maintain this difference in English I will make use of *evangelic* and *evangelical*. The first will be used in labels such as *Evangelic-Lutheran* or *Evangelic-Catholic*, the latter indicates the *evangelical movements*.

I will make use of the term *denominational tradition* in the same way as in the PCS,⁵¹ aiming at those traditions or confessions that emerged after the Council of Trent and the formulation of the Book of Concord.

As noted above an important aspect of the PCS is its intention to find a ‘deeper understanding’ of earlier decisive questions ‘beyond’ earlier Anglican Lutheran agreements and identities.⁵² ‘Beyond’ is thus a result of the ‘deeper understanding’ through the churches *conversion, renewal* and *transformation*.⁵³

⁴⁹ Repo, ‘A Brief Review on the Eastern Orthodox-Porvoo Dialogue’, p140.

⁵⁰ About the Church as catholic see WCC, *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p13; WCC, *God in Your Grace...*, p257.

⁵¹ The concept is used at one occasion in the PCS §22.

⁵² Cf. PCS Foreword §3; PCS §§5, 22.

⁵³ For a discussion about ecumenism understood as a process of conversion into the unity given in Christ, see Groupe des Dombes, ‘For the Conversion of the Churches (1991)’, p149ff; Clifford, *The Group Des Dombes*.

1.3. Material, and previous research

The material investigated, besides the PCS and related essays,⁵⁴ is written material from the Porvoo debate in the three sample churches and from the related debate about the PCS. The material investigated can be seen as falling into three categories: 1. official documents from the three sample churches; 2. articles from different contexts; and 3. scholarly publications.

1. Official documents: In all three sample churches a formal process was associated with the PCS and the possibility of approving the PD. The official documents have their origin in the different formal bodies of the churches under investigation, and represent how those responded to the PCS and to the question of approval.

2. Articles: Various authors have written a great number of articles, published in a range of ecumenical periodicals or daily newspapers. Besides published articles, there is also unpublished material from presentations at ecumenical conferences. Some of it was published later in periodicals or on the Porvoo Communion website.⁵⁵ In Denmark, the extensive discussion from 1995 onwards is mainly collected and published in two volumes.⁵⁶ Those volumes cover a great part of the Danish discussion, but there is also material that is not published in those collections.

Lectures given at the Porvoo theological conferences, at the Porvoo Primates' meeting, and at the Porvoo consultation on the ministry of the deacon,⁵⁷ are mostly beyond the scope of this study, because they were not part of the Porvoo debate but of the ongoing Porvoo implementation. The same applies in general for material from the Porvoo implementation, with the exception of Chapter 16, which deals specifically with the implementation of the PCS.

3. Scholarly publications: No comprehensive study of the ecclesiology of the PCS has as yet been made. Five books have been published so far, of which three are doctoral dissertations. In Romania, the Orthodox theologian Iounut-Alexandru Tudorie has studied the PCS from an Orthodox perspective: *Dialogul teologic anglicano-luteran. Acordul bisericesc Porvoo (perspectiva ortodoxa)* [*The Porvoo Common Statement (an Orthodox perspective)*].⁵⁸ Tudorie defended his doctoral thesis in 2007, and it is only

⁵⁴ *Together in Mission and Ministry*.

⁵⁵ www.porvoocommunion.org

⁵⁶ ELCD, CIR, *Kompendium – Udvalg af offentliggjorte danske indlæg i Porvoo-debatten*; ELCD, CIR, *Supplementsbind til kompendium – Udvalg af offentliggjorte danske indlæg i Porvoo-debatten*.

⁵⁷ See Karttunen, Fagerli, and Nathaniel, *Towards Closer Unity*, p337ff.

⁵⁸ Tudorie, *Dialogul teologic anglicano-luteran. Acordul bisericesc Porvoo (perspectiva ortodoxa)* [*The Porvoo Common Statement (Orthodox point of view)*].

available in Romanian.⁵⁹ In 2012 Tudorie published a compendium of all the Anglican-Lutheran dialogues in Romanian.⁶⁰

The Estonian theologian Tiit Pädam publicly defended his dissertation in the spring of 2011 at the University of Uppsala, on *Ordination of Deacons in the Churches of the Porvoo Communion*.⁶¹ This was followed by an investigation of the diaconate in Denmark.⁶² The French theologian Franck Lemaître has written *Anglicans et Luthériens en Europe*, a comparative study of the Anglican-Lutheran dialogues in Europe.⁶³ Tjørhom has edited the anthology *Apostolicity and Unity – Essays on the Porvoo Common Statement*, with papers by scholars from various traditions on aspects of the PCS and its international reception.⁶⁴

Important for the understanding of the PCS are the essays published together with the PCS in *Together in Mission and Ministry*.⁶⁵ This book includes the official English text of the PCS. The history behind the Anglo-Nordic relationship is described by two Swedish historians: by Carl-Henrik Lyttkens in *The Growth of Swedish–Anglican intercommunion between 1833 and 1922*,⁶⁶ and by Lars Österlin in *Svenska kyrkan i profil – Ur engelskt och nordiskt perspektiv* (the Church of Sweden in profile – In English and Nordic Perspective).⁶⁷ Österlin later reworked the book for an English-speaking audience: *Churches in Northern Europe in Profile*.⁶⁸

Additional material is found in different ecumenical documents that have contributed to the PCS and will be presented in chapter two. The ecclesiological literature is mountainous. I will select relevant literature heuristically, based on the needs of my analysis. Some publications concerning apostolicity include John J. Burkhard, *Apostolicity*;⁶⁹ Thomas M. Kocik, *Apostolic Succession in an Ecumenical Context*;⁷⁰ Paolo Cocco, *Successione apostolica e comunione ecclesiale*;⁷¹ Toan Tri Nguyen, *The Apostolicity of the Church*

⁵⁹ Due to the language barrier it has not been possible for me to study Tudorie's investigation. However, in 2006 and 2009 Tudorie published two lectures on the PCS given in the Porvoo Communion-Orthodox dialogue; Tudorie, 'Porvoo Common Statement from an Orthodox Perspective'; Tudorie, 'Theological Dialogue'.

⁶⁰ Tudorie, *De la Reformă la unitatea vizibilă deplină: dialogul teologic dintre anglicani și luterani*.

⁶¹ Pädam, *Ordination of Deacons*.

⁶² Pädam, 'Towards a Common Understanding of Diaconal Ministry?'

⁶³ Lemaître, *Anglicans et luthériens en Europe*.

⁶⁴ Tjørhom, *Apostolicity and Unity*.

⁶⁵ *Together in Mission and Ministry*.

⁶⁶ Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish–Anglican Intercommunion*.

⁶⁷ Österlin, *Svenska kyrkan i profil*.

⁶⁸ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*.

⁶⁹ Burkhard, *Apostolicity Then And Now*.

⁷⁰ Kocik, *Apostolic Succession in an Ecumenical Context*.

⁷¹ Cocco, *Successione apostolica e comunione ecclesiale*.

and *Apostolic Succession*;⁷² and two consultations on *episcopé* and episcopacy organised and published by *Faith & Order*.⁷³

1.4. Considerations related to the material

The text of the PCS is the product of an ecumenical dialogue body. The Porvoo Conversations included delegates, consultants, observers and staff representing different churches, and the product consists, to a great extent, of distillations from earlier ecumenical agreements. This kind of working process, over several years, easily leads to tensions and lack of clarity in the text. As a consequence, the PCS text is not always clear, and the use of concepts is not always consistent – e.g. *fundamental agreement in faith*, *substantial agreement in faith*, *far-reaching agreement*, or the use of *tradition*, *continuity*, and *succession*.⁷⁴

Other material includes articles that contribute to the Porvoo debate. This material is chosen from the three sample churches and from the international ecumenical debate, to demonstrate how those contexts have understood the PCS. In the debate about Porvoo there are not only dogmatic arguments but many others, such as emotional, confessional, nationalistic, or protectionist ones. The texts are situated in different contexts, have different layers and reflect different interests, such as ecumenical theology, local church policy and debate, or the author's personal preferences or confessional position. The articles may be academic in character but programmatic in content, while based on a particular confession and tradition. Other scholarly publications contribute new knowledge. At the same time few, if any, academic contributions to the Porvoo debate can be regarded as purely academic, or as not also relating to one or several of the aspects above. In the treatment of the material, all these variables must be considered when making a balanced analysis of the content of the material.

1.5. Order of investigation

The investigation is conducted in two stages, and the thesis has four main parts.

Part I contains an introductory chapter and another chapter that describes the historical and ecumenical background to, and the content of, the PCS. I will do this to demonstrate the background of the PCS and its reliance on earlier ecumenical dialogue documents.

⁷² Nguyen, *The Apostolicity of the Church and Apostolic Succession*.

⁷³ Bouteneff and Falconer, *Episcopé and Episcopacy and the Quest for Visible Unity*.

⁷⁴ Cf. Gaßman, 'Das Porvoo-Dokument', p182.

In Part II, the aim is to investigate and describe how the PCS was received and understood in the sample churches and in related debates, and what arguments were used for and against the PCS. Part II will deal with similarities and differences in the various interpretations of the PCS, and spans six chapters (chapters 3 to 8). In chapters 3, 4, and 5 I investigate, in order, the *Porvoo debates* in the CoS, the CoE, and the ELCD. Chapter 6 will describe how the PCS was received by other churches and by theologians from ecclesial traditions other than the Porvoo churches. In chapter 7 I will analyse how the Porvoo theologians understood the *deeper understanding* presented in the PCS. Finally, in chapter 8, I summarise the results and describe the content of the divergent interpretations of the PCS, organised schematically in relation to their respective context; and establish whether there were suggestions to improve the *deeper understanding* of the PCS.

In Part III, in chapters 9 to 15, I will analyse the arguments discerned in Part II. The analysis will be thematic, based on the scheme constructed earlier in chapter 8. The themes will be analysed historically and theologically in order to deepen the understanding of the basis of those arguments and of the content of the PCS. To the extent that there were suggestions in the debate to improve the PCS, the content of those will be analysed and discussed.

Part IV, Chapter 16, brings together the results of my investigations in Part II (how the PCS has been interpreted) and Part III (analysis of the arguments for and against the PCS) and discusses the implementation of the PCS in the Porvoo churches and as a communion.

1.6. Methodological and theoretical considerations

The Porvoo solution, according to the Porvoo Conversations, is based on a deeper understanding of ecclesiology and apostolic succession. An acceptance of this deeper understanding means a changed perception about earlier positions. According to the Porvoo Conversations, this changed position is not against earlier positions, but is characterised by new insights. Those insights are the content of the deeper understanding that the PCS claims to present, and is the prerequisite for the Porvoo solution, which lies at the centre of my study. The method used in the investigation can be described as *abductive* – by which I mean a method that is neither purely *inductive* nor *deductive*. Rather, my working method is *abductive* in the sense that, as I have read the material, it has supplied new knowledge that influences how I have continued my investigation. This is true not only for my reading and understanding of the PCS, but also for my study of history, of the ecumenical movement, and of ecclesiology; and of how those relate to the PCS and the various interpretations of the PCS.

The material and the purpose of the investigation make it necessary to carry it out in two stages, represented by Parts II and III. The two-stage ap-

proach is also demonstrated by the question for research and the working questions. First, in Part II, I intend to discern the arguments for and against the Porvoo solution and the ecclesiology on which those arguments are based. Secondly, in Part III, I intend to analyse how those arguments and ecclesiological bases relate to the ecclesiology of the PCS, including apostolic succession. That analysis is done to investigate whether it is possible to deepen the understanding of the PCS beyond the various interpretations in the Porvoo debate, and whether it is possible to develop the content of the PCS.

The abductive approach applies to the thesis as a whole, but on the level of various sections of my investigation I will use methods of inductive, comparative and systematic character. In order to clarify the interpretations of the PCS and the ecclesiology on which they are based, I conduct an inductive and descriptive investigation of the various reactions to the PCS in Part II. At the same time, I contrast the result of the inductive investigation with the content of the PCS. The inductive approach is, however, limited for my research purposes, which is why I will continue in Part III with an analysis of the arguments discerned in Part II. This analysis will be historical and theological.

The arguments discerned in Part II are expressions of the churches' historically-conditioned positions that the PCS aims to overcome through a deeper understanding, and thus to achieve a unity that transcends earlier denominations.⁷⁵ Since neither the PCS nor the positions that the PCS aims to overcome are historically or theologically neutral, it is possible to analyse them historically and theologically. History and theology should not be understood as totally separate, since there is a dynamic relationship between them. A theological analysis requires a consciousness of the historical development of the theological aspect of a certain issue; an historical investigation of a theological meaning necessarily means a theological treatment. At the same time, in the history of inter-church relationships, there are features of specific importance that cannot be said to be theological in the doctrinal sense, but rather are political or economic, and that certainly are historical. Thus the integral relationship between the arguments for and against the PCS, and the content of the PCS needs to be analysed both historically and theologically in order to improve the understanding of the PCS as a theological solution, and to investigate whether it is possible to develop this solution further.

⁷⁵ PCS §22.

2. The Porvoo Common Statement and its background

Three features shaped the Porvoo Conversations and the formulation of the Porvoo Common Statement: the history of the churches involved, with its mixture of isolation and contacts and mutual influences during the pre- and post-Reformation time; the development of the ecumenical movement during the 20th century; and the political changes in Europe around the start of the 1990s. Those features are emphasised in the PCS as vital sources that inspired its processes.¹ Together they serve as the background, basis, and way to present the content of the PCS.

Before I describe the history behind the PCS, I will discuss ecumenical method as understood in the ecumenical movement, of which the PCS is a part. The notion of ‘method’ is important for understanding the PCS, since it is not explicitly addressed in the statement but, rather, is taken for granted.

2.1. Ecumenical method

Since the establishment of *Faith & Order* in the early 20th century, it has been possible to distinguish three main phases in the method of the ecumenical movement. The first two Faith & Order conferences in Lausanne 1927 and Edinburgh 1937 used the method of *comparative ecclesiology* to define the position and ecclesiological tradition of the participating churches. At the third conference of the *Faith & Order Commission*, in Lund in 1952, it introduced a new method that has been of crucial importance in helping the churches to recognise each other and converge. This method is *christological*, and is based on the shared conviction that “Christ has made us His own and Christ is not divided. In seeking Him we find one another”.² As this quotation demonstrates, there is an immediate connection between Christ and his Church, which means that the christological method also has ecclesiological implications. The search for unity in Christ also means the search for a common ecclesiological basis for this unity.

¹ See PCS Foreword, and Chapter I of the PCS, “Setting the Scene”, §§1-13.

² Statement at the third World Conference on Faith & Order in Lund 1952, quoted in; Gros, McManus, and Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p141f.; Cf. Clifford, *The Group Des Dombes*, 1ff, 48.

During the same period, and partly through the contribution of the Orthodox churches to the WCC, the basis for the Council was changed from christological to trinitarian. In 1948, at the founding of the WCC, the basis was formulated as follows: “The World Council is a fellowship of churches which accept our Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour”.³ In New Delhi in 1961 the basis was expanded and expressed as: “The World Council of Churches is a fellowship of churches which confess the Lord Jesus Christ as God and Saviour according to the scriptures and therefore seek to fulfil together their common calling to the glory of the One God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”.⁴ The expanded basis does not contradict the developed ecumenical method, but means that the christocentric goal of the ecumenical process is understood in a trinitarian perspective, which necessary includes the fact that the Church is seen in a soteriological perspective in relation to the whole creation.

Since the 1970s it has been possible to speak about a third phase in ecumenical method. Following on from the comparative and christological approaches, christological ecclesiology has been broadened through more elaborated pneumatological thinking about the Church. This phase is ongoing, and it has importance for transcending earlier divisive issues.⁵ The early conferences of the WCC followed mainly the conventional protestant thinking on pneumatology of the time.⁶ Gradually the reflection developed. The Faith & Order conference in Lund (1952), so important for the christological method, reached a new understanding of the missionary task as participation in the *missio Dei*. In that perspective the continuity of the church is assured “by the constant action of the risen Lord through the Holy Spirit”, and it is through the “unifying power of His indwelling Spirit” that the organic unity of the body of Christ is sustained.⁷ The new orientation led in New Delhi (1961) to the WCC’s expanded trinitarian basis. At Faith & Order in Montreal two years later the pneumatological perspective in relation to Scripture and tradition was explored. Faith & Order in Louvain (1971) gathered together studies initiated at Montreal and laid the ground for the elaboration of the Lima document, *Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry* (BEM, 1982). BEM describes the church, the sacraments and the ministry in pneumatological perspective. In Santiago de Compostela in 1993 Faith & Order emphasised that *koinonia*-theology carries potential for pneumatological developments, because there is a growing consensus about the church as a communion in the

³ The two quotations are taken from the assemblies of the WCC in 1948 (Amsterdam) and in 1961 (New Delhi), see Tanner, ‘Ecumenical Theology’, p557.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p298ff; Chapter 14.3.3.

⁶ For a comprehensive overview of pneumatology and the WCC, see; Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, p68ff.

⁷ Quoted from Ibid., p70.

Spirit. This pronouncement was made after the completion of the PCS, but it witnesses to the same development.

Without diminishing the importance of the comparative method, turning to a christological perspective, and later a pneumatological one, has made the progress of ecumenical bi- and multilateral dialogues possible. Through the new method, the focus shifted from the particularities of each church's 'own' tradition and from the differences between the churches, to a mutual search for Christ and a more authentic expression of his Church. It was possible to recognise one's 'own' tradition in a new formulation of the Church, without necessarily denying that the same recognition was made by another church. At the same time, the search for unity given in and by Christ has meant that the confessional traditions have been relativized, and unity is seen to be found beyond them.⁸

The change of method is congruent with a changed historical perception of great importance for the ecumenical approach during the twentieth century. The traditional controversial issues of the Reformation had numerous causes that were rooted in the turbulent historical situation of the 16th century. Those have, however, been relativized through “‘the emergence of the modern world’ and because of new insights in the natural, social and historical sciences and in biblical theology”,⁹ and new views of the confessional differences have developed that can be altered by the christological and pneumatological methods and with the help of contemporary theology representing those new insights. The new insights and the new methodological approach has led the churches to search for a new language and an alternative understanding of the Church that lies beyond the traditional controversial expressions. The approach was suggested for the ecumenical dialogues in 1980 by the Faith & Order commission:

We try to use a new language in order to express a doctrinal deepening that enables the parties to overcome misunderstandings, disagreements and the partiality of those confessional positions which existed in an earlier polemical context.¹⁰

The advantage of this approach is that the churches make use of a common language, that goes beyond the exclusive association with one church tradition more than with another.¹¹ The foremost example of such language is the

⁸ Cf. the first question asked by the Faith & Order Commission to the churches in the Foreword to BEM: “The extent to which your church can recognize in this text the faith of the Church through the ages”. Faith & Order, ‘Lima Report: Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry (BEM), 1982’, p469.

⁹ LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p172, §15; see also p169, §2.

¹⁰ Faith & Order, *The Report of the Third Forum on Bilateral Conversations (October 6-10, 1980)*, p46.

¹¹ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p279; Chapter 9.2. Fuchs notes: “For example, ‘confession’ in Lutheranism, ‘historic episcopate’ in Anglicanism, and ‘sacramental’ in Roman Catholicism”.

biblical notion of *koinonia*. The strength of this concept is that it is not a controversial term and as a biblical concept it does not belong to any of the churches but to all. This is ecumenically liberating and means that all traditions can deepen their own tradition in the perspective of the church understood as *koinonia*. This is no less true for the bilateral dialogues of the Lutheran, Anglican, and RC churches which means that they have, on the one hand, deepened their sense of being a communion in themselves, and, on the other hand, those churches relate to each other in terms of communion, which functions as the theological construct underlying their dialogues.¹² As I will demonstrate, this approach is valid also for how the PCS is construed and how the church, as *koinonia* in a christological and pneumatological perspective, lays the basis for the treatment of the controversial question of apostolic succession beyond earlier confessional particularities.¹³ First, however, I will describe the history behind the PCS and how history is used in the PCS as an important methodological prerequisite.

2.2. The history of Anglo-Nordic-Baltic relations

In the PCS's dealing with the problems related to apostolic succession, the history of the Porvoo churches are decisive and a prerequisite for its method. It is therefore important to understand how the PCS understands the history of the Porvoo churches and uses it in relation to its method. In the introductory chapter of the PCS, the many historical links between the Porvoo churches, both pre- and post-Reformation, are sketched as an important basis and motivation for the agreement.¹⁴ The PCS states:

We share in the liturgical heritage of Western Christianity and also in the Reformation emphases upon justification by faith and upon word and sacrament as means of grace. All this is embodied in our confessional and liturgical documents and is increasingly recognized both as an essential bond between our churches and as a contribution to the wider ecumenical movement. Despite geographical separation and a wide diversity of language, culture and historical development, the Anglican and Lutheran churches in Britain and Ireland and in the Nordic and Baltic countries have much in common, including much common history.¹⁵

The reformation of the Anglican and Lutheran parties was conservative in intention, and sought to maintain as much as possible of the patristic and medieval traditions, and to remove only what was seen to be contrary to the

¹² Ibid., p280.

¹³ PCS §5.

¹⁴ The history of Nordic-Anglican relations is presented in Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*; Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*.

¹⁵ PCS §7f.

gospel. The PCS also emphasised that the two traditions “have at no time condemned one another as churches and have never formally separated. But a deeper realization of communion is certainly desirable”.¹⁶

The Nordic region is in many ways a culturally, politically, and linguistically homogeneous area, with many ‘family similarities’ between the five countries that have contributed to a common Nordic identity and consciousness of togetherness. At the same time there are many cultural, political, and linguistic differences between the Nordic countries. Those differences are also ecclesiological, and it is possible, though a little simplistic, to describe the Nordic countries as consisting of an eastern and a western part.¹⁷ The eastern part – the churches of Finland and Sweden with links to the Baltic churches – has preserved episcopal succession and more of its pre-Reformation traditions; while the western part – the churches of Iceland, Norway, and Denmark – is more protestant with a breach in the manual episcopal succession.¹⁸ A precondition for the PCS was the common catholic identity which all the Nordic churches simultaneously shared in varying degrees. They are episcopally ordered, and they have preserved the pre-Reformation episcopal sees and much of their liturgical and spiritual heritage. The same is the case for the Anglican churches and – to various degrees – the Baltic Lutheran churches involved in the Porvoo process.¹⁹ This continuation of catholic and apostolic life in the continuing daily life of the Church is a precondition that is emphasised in the PCS.²⁰

Despite what the churches have in common, there were still differences to overcome, which the PCS understands historically. The history is specifically described not in the statement itself, but in the essays gathered in *Together in Mission and Ministry*, and with particular reference to overcoming the divisive question – that is, episcopal succession. History is used in two ways in the PCS. On the one hand, it is used to demonstrate how much the Porvoo churches have in common – historically, spiritually, and theologically. On the other hand, history is used, with the same purpose, to relativise the divisive issues that still separate the churches.

This historical relativising does not necessarily mean that divisive issues disappear; but it does mean that they are nuanced and, in the case of the Porvoo churches, it demonstrates that the traditions of the churches concerned are closer to each other than had earlier been stated.²¹ Illuminated by the history of the churches, divisive differences can be relativised and understood anew. In the PCS and related essays it is said that the different tradi-

¹⁶ PCS §29.

¹⁷ Cf. Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p70ff.

¹⁸ Cf. Tjørhom, ‘Ecumenical Research on Ministry and Ordination’, p487.

¹⁹ the ELCLith and the Scottish Episcopal Church do not claim *successio sedis*, but the episcopate of both those churches are ordained in manual episcopal succession.

²⁰ C.f. PCS §§7, 34, and the essays in *Together in Mission and Ministry*.

²¹ Cf. Hill, ‘Existing Agreements’, p56ff.

tions about apostolic succession are related to how the various church provinces of the western catholic church acted, each in its respective context, at the time of the Reformation. According to the essays this means that “Anglicans may well be a little less emphatic about an unbroken episcopal succession when they see how precarious their succession was in the first 150 years after the Reformation”.²² Likewise, history is used to demonstrate why the churches of Denmark, Norway, and Iceland have traditionally emphasised that, due to the grave state of decay of the Danish episcopate at the Reformation, it was necessary to break the line of episcopal ordination in order to restore episcopacy as a pastoral ministry.²³

In my rendering of the historical background of the PCS, I will to a great extent make use of the descriptions of the history found in the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue-documents, and I will not get involved in discussion with how various historians have described this history, but treat it synoptically.

2.2.1. Early Anglo-Nordic-Baltic relations

In the formative phase of the Reformation, Luther and Lutheran theologians significantly influenced the English Reformation. The Lutheran influence left its mark on Archbishop Cranmer’s first Book of Common Prayer, on the Book of Homilies, on English translations of the Bible, and on many of the Anglican *Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion*.²⁴ Later, the Lutheran influence on the English Reformation was superseded by the Calvinist influence on the concept of real presence in the eucharist and of predestination.²⁵

Due to the Reformation split and the rise of the nation-state, the emerging Lutheran and Anglican churches became closely tied to state interests, which meant that inter-church relationships only occurred when political factors favoured them. The close connection with emerging nation-states was also true for the emerging Roman Catholic Church. The Reformation churches may, to a great extent, be understood as political projects. This was also true for the Porvoo churches. In the period 1535-1536, an early attempt was made to form a political alliance between England and the German Lutheran states, resulting in the so-called Wittenberg Articles.²⁶ The attempt did not succeed, and the Lutheran and Anglican churches withdrew for the most part into national isolation from each other. The same is true for the Nordic states and churches, which at this time consisted only of Denmark (including Norway and Iceland) and Sweden (including Finland and, from 1561, Estonia). A church union between the Danish and the Swedish churches was not an

²² Hill, ‘Introduction’, p49.

²³ Pedersen, ‘Episcopacy in Our Churches: Denmark’, p85; Hill, ‘Existing Agreements’, p57; Chapter 14.3.1.

²⁴ ALIC, ‘Cold Ash Report 1983’, p70, §8; Arnold, ‘From Meissen to Porvoo’, p77.

²⁵ ALIC, ‘Cold Ash Report 1983’, p70, §9.

²⁶ Tustin and Root, ‘Anglican-Lutheran Agreements’, p11.

issue, since the two countries were enemies until the last Swedish-Danish war of 1808-1809 when Denmark was in alliance with France and Sweden with Great Britain. In fact, the contacts between the Nordic churches and the English church were greater than those between the Nordic churches.²⁷

During the latter half of the 16th century, the English church was met with suspicion by the Nordic churches, and regarded as Calvinistic. This understanding shifted during the 17th century when more representatives of the Nordic countries visited England and found a church that, at least officially, was somewhat different from a Reformed church.²⁸ The Nordic churches continued to emphasise the need for Anglican clarification on the 'real presence' in the eucharist until the finalisation of the PCS.²⁹ There was also suspicion in the other direction; when a new Danish church was built in London in 1692, "visiting Anglicans were somewhat shocked by its Roman-looking interior and because its priests wore eucharistic vestments".³⁰ Correspondingly, and in order not to be perceived as too Roman, the priest in the Swedish parish in London chose to celebrate mass without the usual vestments so as not to provoke the English hosts, and to adopt the English calendar so as not to be taken as sectarian. When pastorally required, the Swedish and Danish priests in London regularly used the rituals of the *Book of Common Prayer*.³¹

When the two traditions from the 17th century onwards spread all over the world, it meant both increased individual and formal contacts between the two traditions. The Nordic churches' parishes in England were established with the full approval of the English Crown, and were understood as belonging to episcopal churches with similar relationships to their respective national state to that of the CoE.³² The English *Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge* (SPCK) financially supported the Danish Halle Mission to India (Tranqebur), and employed Danish priests in the English Mission to India. From 1728 to 1825 SPCK supported or employed about sixty missionaries ordained in Lutheran churches.³³ On the recommendation of the Swedish superintendent of Narva (in Estonia), Johannes Gezelius,³⁴ in 1685 the Swedish King Carl XI employed an Anglican priest for the English population in Narva. In his recommendation to the King, Gezelius stated that the Anglican

²⁷ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p107.

²⁸ Hagberg, *Jacob Serenius kyrkliga insats*, p36.

²⁹ PCS §32h.

³⁰ Stevenson, 'Notes Submitted by the Danish Delegation', p163f.

³¹ Hagberg, *Jacob Serenius kyrkliga insats*, p26ff.

³² Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p143.

³³ Hill, 'Introduction', p47.

³⁴ From the mid-16th century, superintendents existed in the CoS alongside the episcopate. The office of 'superintendent' was established by King Gustav Vasa in an attempt to replace episcopacy in Sweden, as in Germany. However, he did not succeed to do so. The office of superintendent remained in the CoS till 1772, when the last superintendent was ordained bishop. Brodd, 'Superintendenturen som ersättning', p221ff.

Church should not be confused with Calvinism, and that the Anglican Church stood closer to the Swedish church than any other church, including many Lutheran churches.³⁵

In the early 18th century, based on a similar evaluation of the Anglican Church, the Swedish Bishop of Skara, Jesper Svedberg, as the bishop responsible for the congregations in London and in North America, recommended that Swedish priests be in close contact with their Anglican colleagues. In a kind of altar and pulpit fellowship, the churches in North America exchanged clergy and services.³⁶ On the English side, the fellowship was supported by Svedberg's friend, the Anglican bishop and former English Ambassador in Stockholm, John Robinson. The three bishops – Svedberg, Robinson, and Gezelius (now ordained Bishop of Turku) – were all separately involved in an early attempt to establish a church union between the CoS and CoE in 1718. The attempt did not succeed, partly because of Sweden's defeat in the war against Tsar Peter of Russia, and because of the Swedish depression.³⁷ In 1829 the Swedish priest and missionary Peder Fjellstedt, ordained by Bishop Bjurback of Karlstad, was received to serve in an Anglican missionary society. A few years later, in 1837, at the request of Bishop Blomfield of London, Swedish bishops confirmed the children of English residents in Sweden.³⁸

2.2.2. Modern Anglo-Nordic relations

During the 19th century, interest in closer relations between the Anglican and the Nordic churches grew. There were several reasons for this. Long before the emergence of the Oxford movement in the 1830s, the old 'high church school' in the CoE had developed an ecclesiology that understood the church as consisting of different branches. While the universal church was separated into national churches, 'communio' prevailed between the branches through the same faith, the same government, and the same liturgy. Even though there was an obvious ecumenical potential in this ecclesiology, it seems that no such conclusions were drawn before the emergence of the Oxford movement. In a few decades, the movement developed a practical ecumenical programme aiming at "'Catholic intercommunion' between the branches of the Catholic Church".³⁹ This visionary ecumenical programme would not be realised until about 150 years later with the breakthrough of the modern

³⁵ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p120ff. The same was said by bishop Jacob Serenius of Strängnäs; see Hagberg, *Jacob Serenius kyrkliga insats*, p255.

³⁶ Hagberg, *Jacob Serenius kyrkliga insats*, p69ff; CoS, the Bishops' Conference, 'To the Conference of Bishops in the Anglican Communion', p375.

³⁷ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p123ff.

³⁸ Neill and Rouse, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, I, 1: p296.

³⁹ Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*, p141.

ecumenical movement. Apparently the churches, as isolated confessions at this time, were not mature enough for such an ecumenical programme.

The Oxford movement meant a rediscovery of the historic Church, and it challenged the churches' reliance on the nation-state. Since the Church was understood as supra-national, it also meant a strong impulse for ecumenical thinking, an emphasis on the historicity of the Church, and its continuation from Jesus and the apostles, symbolised by episcopal succession.⁴⁰ The Oxford movement, with its emergence in the 1830s, was part of the more general Romantic Movement with its love of history and antiquity, and – like the liturgical renewal movement – intended to go beyond the rationalism of the enlightenment.⁴¹ The new awareness of the Church meant an emphasis on the essential marks of the true church. As a consequence, a distinction was made between those churches that met those requirements and those that did not, and the ecclesial character of non-episcopal churches was challenged.

A further reason for the ecumenical awakening was that, due to the growth of the British Empire, the Anglican Church had developed into a world-wide communion. There was growing awareness that the church was supranational, and there was an increasing need for a coordinating body for the Anglican Communion. The need was particularly emphasised in the 'new' Anglican provinces; the direct suggestion to gather all the bishops of the Anglican Communion came from Canada, and resulted in the first Lambeth Conference in 1867.⁴² Simultaneously, a growing confessional awareness was developing of a Lutheran fellowship in Germany. In 1867 this resulted in the *Allgemeine Evangelisch-Lutherische Konferenz* (the General Evangelical-Lutheran Conference), which also included some Nordic churchmen.⁴³ The Conference can be seen as the embryo of the later *Lutheran World Federation* (LWF), founded in 1947, important for the international Anglican-Lutheran dialogue, and could have become an alternative to the later Porvoo Communion.

The establishment of the Lambeth Conference was also important for Anglican-Lutheran relations. The rapid development and expansion of American society in the 19th century also meant a growth and expansion of the churches, including the Anglican and Nordic-Lutheran churches in America. The idea that they could unite as one Episcopal Church was brought to the Lambeth Conference by the American bishops. In preparations for the conference, several quarters independently suggested that the CoS should also be invited to send representatives to Lambeth. This, however, was not realised until 1908.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p182ff.

⁴¹ Neill and Rouse, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, I, I: p269.

⁴² Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p206ff.

⁴³ Wadensjö, *Toward a World Lutheran Communion*, p17ff.

⁴⁴ Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*, p202.

The issue of the basis for the identity of the church and the ecumenical idea were further developed at the third Lambeth Conference in 1888. There the bishops approved the *Chicago Lambeth Quadrilateral*, which would become the basis for Anglican ecumenical policy. The four points of the Quadrilateral are: the Holy Scripture in the Old and New Testaments, the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds, the two sacraments of baptism and the eucharist instituted by Christ himself, and fourthly, the historic episcopate given by God for the unity of His Church.⁴⁵ With the Quadrilateral as a basis, the conference worked on the possibilities of developing closer communion with the Nordic churches, stating:

In the opinion of this Conference, earnest efforts should be made to establish more friendly relations between the Nordic and Anglican Churches; and that approaches on the part of the Swedish Church, with a view to the mutual explanation of differences, be most gladly welcomed, in order to the ultimate establishment, if possible, of intercommunion on sound principles of ecclesiastical polity.⁴⁶

The different approaches to the Nordic churches were based on a preparatory text by a commission that stated that, in contrast to the Swedish church:

Greater difficulties are presented as regards communion with the Norwegian and Danish churches by the constitution of their ministry; but there are grounds of hope, in the growing appreciation of Church order, that in the course of time these difficulties may be surmounted. It is much to be desired that a basis of union shall be formed with a people who are distinguished by great devotional earnestness and uprightness of character.⁴⁷

The first practical step towards realising the Anglican intention to be in communion with the CoS was taken by the Lambeth Conference of 1908, which established a commission for the purpose.⁴⁸ In September 1909 Anglican and Swedish representatives met in Uppsala. The meeting could be regarded as the first modern bilateral dialogue. The Anglican commission published its report in 1911 and presented it to the Lambeth conference of 1920.⁴⁹ The report stated that the CoS shared, with Anglicans and the wider Catholic Church, a common understanding of episcopacy, and that the CoS's succession of bishops had been unbroken. It recommended eucharistic hospitality, that clergy from the CoS should be permitted to preach in the CoE, and that bishops should be invited to take part in episcopal ordinations in the

⁴⁵ "Text of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral 1886/1888", in Wright, 'Quadrilateral at One Hundred', pVII-IX.

⁴⁶ Lambeth Conference 1888, Resolution 14, quoted from Söderblom, 'Dokument till fråga om nattvardsgemenskap med Englands kyrka', p356.

⁴⁷ Committee on the relation with other Churches for the Lambeth Palace Conference, quoted from Ibid., p355f.

⁴⁸ Archbishop Söderblom has described the process from 1888-1922 in Ibid., p355ff.

⁴⁹ Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*, p216, 244.

other church.⁵⁰ The Lambeth Conference of 1920 approved these recommendations. Even though a decision of the Lambeth Conference has no canonical force, in the same year two Anglican bishops, invited by Archbishop Nathan Söderblom, participated in an episcopal ordination in Uppsala.⁵¹ In 1927, a Swedish bishop participated for the first time in an Anglican bishop's ordination, in Canterbury.⁵²

In 1922 the Swedish bishops' conference responded "with deep and sincere satisfaction" to the inter-communion reached, but emphasised that episcopal succession, while seen as a gift of the Holy Spirit and far more than simply an honoured tradition, could not be seen as a condition for church fellowship.⁵³ The bishops' conference stated:

No particular organization of the Church and of its ministry is instituted *jure divino*, not even the order and the discipline and state of things recorded in the New Testament. ... That doctrine in no wise makes our Church indifferent to the organization and the forms of ministry which the cravings and experiences of the Christian community have produced under the guidance of the Spirit in the course of history.⁵⁴

In due course I will come back to this statement and its double content regarding episcopal succession as both not necessary (*iure divino*) and as a gift of the Holy Spirit.⁵⁵

The initial intention of the Lambeth Conference was to establish closer relations with all the Nordic churches. In 1933 and 1934, the CoE initiated conversations with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland (ELCF) and with the Evangelical Lutheran Churches in Estonia and Latvia (1936-1938). In 1935 the CoE regulated its relationship with the ELCF to allow admission to communion and participation in episcopal ordination. In the English discussion, it had been noted that there had been a break in the episcopal suc-

⁵⁰ Lambeth Conference 1920, Resolution 24-25, quoted in Vajta, *Church in Fellowship*, p180f; also in Söderblom, 'Dokument till fråga om nattvardsgemenskap med Englands kyrka', p364.

⁵¹ Söderblom, 'Dokument till fråga om nattvardsgemenskap med Englands kyrka', p364f. See also Part IV, Appendix.

⁵² Wikmark, *Ernst Lönegren*, p248f. and Appendix Part IV. In 1930 and as a gesture of the deepened relationship the CoS presented the CoE and the Cathedral of Canterbury with a replica from a Swedish original of a statue of St. Thomas of Becket. See <http://www.canterbury-archaeology.org.uk/becketv20/4590809615> (2016-10-15).

⁵³ CoS, the Bishops' Conference, 'To the Conference of Bishops in the Anglican Communion', p275f. In its essentials the letter was written by Bishop Einar Billing in collaboration with Archbishop Nathan Söderblom and professor Knut B. Westman and included the content of a statement of the CoS's commission at the meeting in 1909. This statement was drawn up by, at that time professors, Billing and Söderblom as a summary of the CoS's doctrine on "the holy ministry and the constitution of the Church of Christ". Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*, p213, 260f.

⁵⁴ CoS, the Bishops' Conference, 'To the Conference of Bishops in the Anglican Communion', p375f. For an extended quote and comment see chapter 13.2.

⁵⁵ See Chapters 6.1, 13.2, and 14.

cession in the ELCF, and that it had been restored through the Swedish episcopate in 1934. In 1936, the Finnish Archbishop Kaila of Turku responded positively to the agreement, which was similar to the answer by the Swedish bishops in 1922.⁵⁶

A year later, in 1937, the Archbishop of Latvia and the Bishop of Estonia took the initiative to make an agreement similar to the one between the CoE and the ELCF. The agreement was mutually approved in 1939, and meant “mutual participation in episcopal consecrations, the mutual admission of communicants to their respective altars, the invitation of the Baltic bishops to a future Lambeth Conference and the celebration of baptism and marriage by Anglican Clergy for the Latvian and Estonian diaspora and vice-versa”.⁵⁷ In the course of European history after 1939 the first joint Anglican-Baltic episcopal ordination did not happen until 1989, when the Archbishop of Uppsala ordained the Archbishop of Latvia, assisted by the Anglican Bishop of Gibraltar.⁵⁸ However, in 1964 the Archbishop of Uppsala ordained the archbishop for the Estonian exile church. In 1968 the Archbishop of Turku managed to ordain the Archbishop of Estonia, and in 1969 the Swedish Bishop of Skara ordained the Archbishop of Latvia.⁵⁹

After World War II, informal conversations were held in Chichester in 1947 with representatives of the churches of England, Norway, Denmark, and Iceland. In 1951, formally-appointed representatives of the churches met in Oslo. In the Anglican report to the Archbishop of Canterbury it was stated that “the Churches of Denmark, Norway and Iceland are in agreement with the Church of England in the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith”,⁶⁰ but noted also differences over episcopal succession.⁶¹ The Lutheran representatives were unwilling to speak of a recovery of episcopal succession. The Danish professor and delegate Regin Prenter emphasised that the Lutheran churches could not accept a description as the “restoration of apostolic succession”, because that would imply a change in the character of their ministry. In contrast he suggested that mutual recognition would be the only way forward, and that “if a Norwegian bishop were to take part in an Anglican consecration first, and not vice versa, that would indicate that mutual recognition had been reached”.⁶² Prenter also called attention to the fact that the 1888 Lambeth Quadrilateral spoke not of ‘apostolic succession’, but of

⁵⁶ Hill, ‘Existing Agreements’, p56.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid. See also Appendix Part IV.

⁵⁹ For a more detailed list of those ordinations see Part IV, Appendix.

⁶⁰ CoE, Anglican Committee Appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury for the Oslo Meeting, ‘The Oslo Report 1951’, p4f (p283Bf in the archive folder).

⁶¹ Ibid., p6, (p284B in the archive folder).

⁶² Ramsey, *The Church of England and the Churches of Norway, Denmark, and Iceland*, p31. This is actually what has happened. In each case a western Nordic bishop has participated in the ordination of an Anglican bishop prior to Anglican participation in the ordination of western Nordic bishops. See Part IV, Appendix.

‘the historic episcopate’ and suggested that Anglicans should explore the broader aspects of succession in office and function rather than concentrating too much on the bare mechanical aspect of episcopal succession. In the end the meeting led to a more restricted fellowship between the CoE and the western Nordic churches than with the Eastern-Nordic and Baltic churches. Each delegation recommended to its own church authorities that eucharistic hospitality should be authorised.⁶³ The agreement was formally approved by the churches concerned between 1954 and 1956,⁶⁴ and resulted in a ‘limited intercommunion’, which pre-dated the Meissen Agreement by over 30 years. It is noteworthy that Prenter’s suggestions have been vindicated by the wider ecumenical movement, as well as by the PCS.

The agreements between the Anglican and Lutheran churches in Northern Europe are important as background to the PCS, because they are described in the foreword of the PCS as “existing piecemeal agreements”,⁶⁵ which the PCS aims to supersede with a more thorough agreement.

Another important impetus to the growing relations between the Nordic-Baltic and Anglican churches was the *Anglo-Scandinavian Theological Conference* (later *Anglo-Nordic-Baltic Theological Conference*), which began in 1929 and gathers theologians from the two traditions for theological discussions.⁶⁶ A complementary version of such a conference, the *Anglo-Nordic Pastoral Conference*, began in 1978. It changed its name in 2012 to the *Porvoo Communion Pastoral Conference*, and continues to gather clergy every second year for pastoral reflection and exchange.⁶⁷

Before reviewing the next phase of the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue, from the 1950s onwards, I will discuss the ecumenical movement and its perception of apostolic succession as it is a prerequisite for the PCS. After the ecumenical movement had adopted the christological method from the 1950s, ecclesiology became increasingly important; and this had consequences for the notion of apostolic succession.

2.3. The ecumenical background to the PCS

The foreword to the PCS emphasises that both the initiative behind the Porvoo Conversations and the formulation of the PCS were a consequence of the progress of the international ecumenical movement. The two chairmen wrote that “a new climate of theological debate was created at world level by the bilateral and multilateral ecumenical dialogues of the 1970s and 80s, as

⁶³ Hill, ‘Existing Agreements’, p57.

⁶⁴ Ramsey, *The Church of England and the Churches of Norway, Denmark, and Iceland*, p31; Tustin, ‘The Danish Folk-Church and the CoE’.

⁶⁵ PCS Foreword §6.

⁶⁶ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p260ff.

⁶⁷ Bäckström, ‘Helping Churches Face up to Ever Changing Social Contexts’, p13.

evidenced by the following reports in particular: Pullach 1973, Lima (BEM) 1982, Helsinki 1982, Cold Ash 1983 and Niagara 1988. This last report in particular has thrown new light on old questions of Faith & Order.”⁶⁸ The anchoring of the PCS in the ecumenical movement and in earlier ecumenical documents is crucial to understanding it, and makes it important to investigate how those dialogues understood apostolic succession. Those documents are mostly the products of bilateral dialogues, but arise also from the influential multilateral BEM document.

I begin with a general overview of how apostolicity and succession have been interpreted in the ecumenical movement, and in particular in the dialogues of the Lutheran, Anglican, and Roman Catholic churches, since those, together with the BEM document, are the most important dialogues leading to the formulation of the PCS. The importance of those dialogues for the PCS is evidenced by the references to them in the PCS.

2.3.1. Apostolicity, succession, and the ecumenical movement

During the second half of the 20th century there was a shift in how the notion of apostolicity was treated. From the 1950s, the discussion of apostolicity turned from a treatment in the context of ordained ministry to seeing apostolicity as an attribute of the whole church.⁶⁹ This changed perspective mirrors not only the earlier mentioned methodological shift of the ecumenical movement, but also the increasing importance attributed to ecclesiology during the 20th century – a development catalysed by the ecumenical movement and that influenced the self-reflection of most churches.⁷⁰

The ecclesiological Copernican revolution during the Second Vatican Council is an expression of this development. Instead of starting with the hierarchy and then turning to the faithful, the council rewrote the first draft of the document on the constitution of the church, *Lumen Gentium*, and took, as its departure point, the Church – understood as a mystical sign in the world and as the people of God – and then, in the context of the whole Church, the hierarchy was discussed.⁷¹ The changed ecclesiological perspective in *Lumen Gentium* is important, since it has, in turn, influenced the ecclesiological understanding of the ecumenical movement, with consequences for the perception of apostolic succession.⁷² The development of ecclesiology during the 20th century may be seen to have run parallel and been inter-linked with the development of the three ecumenical methods; as compara-

⁶⁸ PCS Foreword §2.

⁶⁹ Many have noted this, inter alia; Maffei, *Il ministero nella Chiesa*, p237ff; Sullivan, *The Church We Believe In*, p185ff; McSorley, ‘Recognition of a Presbyteral Succession?’, p23.

⁷⁰ Cf. Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*, p7; Rusama, ‘Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry in Bilateral Dialogues’, p245.

⁷¹ RCC, ‘*Lumen Gentium*’.

⁷² Cf. Repo, ‘Episcopal Ministry and the Diversity of Charisms’, p88ff.

tive, christological and pneumatological. In the first half of that century ecclesiology emphasised the Church as the ‘body of Christ’, in the mid-century the Church as the ‘people of God’ grew in importance, and in the second half of the century the Church as the ‘temple of the Spirit’ and pneumatology became more important.

Both the ecumenical movement and Vatican II can be seen as children of the exegetical and patristic research undertaken during the 20th century, which did not belong to any particular confessional tradition. The development of ecclesiology is an expression of how the churches cross-fertilised each other during this period. Of great importance for the evolution of the ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium* were the ecumenical observers who participated in Vatican II. Among the most influential were the Lutheran scholars Edmund Schlink and Oscar Cullman,⁷³ and the Orthodox scholar Nicolai Afanasiev.⁷⁴ Another example of this cross-fertilisation is that, in the 1940s, theologians in the CoS developed a sacramental ecclesiology as a way to overcome Roman institutionalism and protestant individualism.⁷⁵ The common striving for a new ecclesiology has been vital to the ecumenical method to find *unity through a deepened understanding* beyond earlier denominations.

A consequence of ecclesiological and ecumenical development is that it is generally acknowledged that apostolicity is a mark of the whole Church. However, two other main issues have been much disputed. Both relate to the problem that the PCS intends to solve. *The first is how apostolicity is concretised and recognised in the church, including how ordained ministry is an expression of the Church’s apostolicity. The second issue is how different understandings of apostolicity and succession can be reconciled with each other.* Both of those issues have been treated by various ecumenical dialogues, and it is possible to identify their evolution in the discussions of apostolic succession, which I will describe below.

Important and early publications about the new way to understand apostolic succession were written by the German Lutheran theologian Edmund Schlink.⁷⁶ In the late 1950s and early 1960s Schlink was a member of the Commission that prepared the Fourth World Conference of Faith & Order in Montreal in 1963. In early 1963 the commission published a preparatory document called *Report on Christ and the Church*. In the document, the commission tried to broaden the conception of apostolic succession in order to find a way forward, stating:

⁷³ Steger, *Apostolic Succession: In the Writings of Yves Congar and Oscar Cullmann*.

⁷⁴ Plekon, ‘The Church of the Holy Spirit - Nicholas Afanasiev’, pxi. The reference is to *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani Secundi* (Vatican City 1971), vol. 1, pt. 4, 87, note 2; vol. 2, pt. 1, 251, note 27; vol. 3, pt. 1, 254.

⁷⁵ Brodd, ‘The Church as Sacrament in the Writings of Yngve Brilioth’.

⁷⁶ Schlink, ‘Die apostolische Sukzession’; Schlink, ‘Apostolic Succession’; Schwenzer, *Die grossen Taten Gottes und die Kirche*, p101ff.

If ministerial succession is separated from the apostolic word in the scriptures, from subordination to it, or from sound doctrine as attested in the rule of faith, it is a false succession, even though the links may be historically unbroken. But it may also be true that if ministerial succession is broken here and there, its defects may be amply made up in coherent succession of the whole apostolic tradition.⁷⁷

The text was an attempt to bridge the gap between churches with episcopal succession and those that had not maintained such a succession. The similarity to the Porvoo solution thirty years later is striking. The attempt was primarily emphasised by protestant participators, but it became clear in Montreal in 1963 that the Orthodox churches could not take such a step, since they regarded the uninterrupted episcopal succession from the apostles as an essential guarantee of valid ministry and a safeguard of the true faith.⁷⁸ The reflection on apostolic succession therefore had to continue.

Through Vatican II the RCC opened up to ecumenism, and in 1965 the Joint Working Group set up by the RCC and the WCC suggested that a special theological commission should work with the general theme of “Apostolicity and Catholicity”.⁷⁹ During the working process, a number of theologians presented papers on apostolic succession, published in *Concilium* in 1968.⁸⁰ In 1970, the Study Commission published a *Study Document*, together with essays written by members of the commission.⁸¹

Other important contributions to the ecumenical development during the 20th century were the documents produced by the *Groupe des Dombes*. Founded in 1937 by Abbé Paul Couturier, the group gathered RC, Reformed, and Lutheran theologians from across French-speaking Europe for ecumenical discussions. In 1972 the group published *Towards a Reconciliation of Ministries*, followed in 1976 by *The Episcopal Ministry*. The documents have contributed importantly to the formulations of the official ecumenical bi- and multilateral documents of the churches.⁸²

When in 1972 the *Lutheran-Roman Catholic Joint Commission (LRCJC)* presented the Malta Report, *The Gospel and the Church*, it was the result of more than a decade of articles and books about the apostolicity of the church and its relation to succession. The report contained the agreements, convergences, and unresolved issues that emerged from the joint Study Commis-

⁷⁷ WCC, *Report on Christ and the Church*, p54ff.

⁷⁸ Van der Borght, *Theology of Ministry*, p304.

⁷⁹ Joint Working Group, ‘First Report of the Joint Working Group of the WCC and the RCC 17-20 Nov 1965’.

⁸⁰ Küng, *Apostolic Succession*.

⁸¹ WCC and RCC Joint Theological Commission, ‘Study Document on “Catholicity and Apostolicity”’. This contained articles by commission members: R. Schnackenburg, J.D. Kelly, E. Lanne, J.D. Zizioulas, J. Bosc, A. Ganoczy, J. Witte, W. Pannenberg. The articles, but not the document, were later re-published in Groscurth, *Katholizität und Apostolizität*.

⁸² For the documents and the history of the *Groupe des Dombes*, see Clifford, *For the Communion of the Churches*; Clifford, *The Group Des Dombes*.

sion of 1965-1971.⁸³ One year later, the RC *International Theological Commission* published the document *Catholic Teaching on Apostolic Succession* in order to “throw light on the concept of apostolic succession”.⁸⁴ Both documents followed the general development of how theologians, from different denominations, described apostolicity and apostolic succession as belonging to the Church as a whole. The documents understand the apostolic origin of the Church both historically and spiritually, both as historically instituted and as an eschatological institution.⁸⁵ The Malta Report states:

The basic intention of the doctrine of apostolic succession is to indicate that, throughout all historical changes in its proclamation and structures, the church is at all times referred back to its apostolic origin. The details of this doctrine seem to us today to be more complicated than before. In the New Testament and the early fathers, the emphasis was obviously placed more on the substance of apostolicity, i.e., on succession in apostolic teaching. In this sense the entire church as the *ecclesia apostolica* stands in apostolic succession. Within this general sense of succession there is a more specific meaning: the succession of the uninterrupted line of the transmission of office. In the early church, primarily in connection with defence against heresies, it was a sign of the unimpaired transmission of the gospel and a sign of unity in the faith. It is in these terms that [Roman] Catholics today are trying once again to develop a deeper understanding of apostolic succession in the ministerial office. Lutherans on their side can grant the importance of a special succession if the pre-eminence of succession in teaching is recognized and if the uninterrupted line of transmission of office is not viewed as an *ipso facto* certain guarantee of the continuity of the right proclamation of the gospel.⁸⁶

The report offers the two ecclesial traditions a description that goes beyond a one-dimensional identification of apostolic succession with *episcopal succession* or with *doctrine*. The two are brought together in what the report calls the “substance of apostolicity” and what has been called a *substantive apostolicity*,⁸⁷ including the whole life of the Church as apostolic, not just a few aspects. As an expression of the apostolicity of the whole church, the report recognises episcopal succession as important for the Church. Whether it is necessary, or how a church without episcopal succession can be reconciled with a church that has retained episcopal succession are, however, not discussed. The document notes that a new awareness in the churches about the historicity and eschatological nature of the Church has made it necessary to rethink the questions inherited from the time of the Reformation about *ius divinum* and *ius humanum*.⁸⁸ The new theological perspective has conse-

⁸³ For a background to the Malta Report, see Wicks, ‘Ecclesiological Issues in the Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue (1965-1985)’, 310ff.

⁸⁴ RCC, International Theological Commission, ‘Catholic Teaching on Apostolic Succession’.

⁸⁵ Ibid.; LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p181, §56.

⁸⁶ LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p181f, §§57–58.

⁸⁷ The term is taken from ALIC, ‘Niagara’, p89, §3.

⁸⁸ LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p175, §31. I will discuss the issue of *ius divinum* in Chapter 13.2.

quences for how episcopacy and succession are evaluated, but it is not expressed in what way.

A similarly broad understanding of apostolic succession is elaborated in the RC document, *Catholic Teaching on Apostolic Succession*, which simultaneously emphasises the necessity of episcopal succession. The document states that “the apostles’ participation in the Last Supper conferred on them the power to preside at the eucharistic celebration”,⁸⁹ and that “authorization can only be given sacramentally through those who have already received the mission”.⁹⁰ The commission establishes that “ordination, given and received in the understanding she [i.e. the RCC] has of it, is necessary to apostolic succession in the strict sense of the word”.⁹¹ The necessity of episcopal succession as an expression of a wider apostolic continuity, is also described in the ARCIC document *Ministry and Ordination* of 1973.⁹²

The Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue returned to apostolic succession in 1981 in the joint document, *The Ministry in the Church*. The document is based on, and develops, the concept of *substantive apostolicity* in the Malta Report, stating:

The starting point must be the apostolicity of the church in the substantive sense. ... The Lutheran tradition speaks in this connection of a *successio verbi*. In present day [Roman] Catholic theology, more and more often the view is adopted that the substantive understanding of apostolicity is primary. Far-reaching agreement on this understanding of apostolic succession is therefore developing.⁹³

Despite these developing and far-reaching agreements, episcopal succession was still valued differently. In question were the two main issues earlier described, how the basis for a valid ordained ministry is understood and relates to the apostolicity of the whole Church, and how a mutual recognition of the ordained ministries of the two traditions can be reached. The document ends with reflections about such a process of recognition and reconciliation, but without any concrete suggestions:

On what conditions and in what way would such a mutual recognition of ministries be possible? There is as yet no general agreed upon answer to this question. Proposals for such procedures as a supplementary ordination, a juridical declaration or a mutual laying on of hands, any of which could be interpreted as either an act of ordination or as an act of reconciliation, are not

⁸⁹ RCC, International Theological Commission, ‘Catholic Teaching on Apostolic Succession’.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² ARCIC, ‘Ministry and Ordination’, p82f, §14ff. Parallel with the Lutheran-Roman Catholic and Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogues, apostolic succession was also discussed in other bilateral dialogues, e.g. The Reformed – Roman Catholic Joint Commission, ‘The Presence of Christ in Church and World, 1977’.

⁹³ LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p267, §60.

completely satisfactory if they are understood as isolated acts. Nor can the question be answered exclusively in terms of canonical criteria of validity. Mutual recognition must not be regarded as an isolated act or carried out as such. It must occur in the confession of the one faith in the context of the unity of the church and in the celebration of the Lord's supper, the sacrament of unity. ... The only theologically meaningful way of solving this question is through a process in which the churches reciprocally accept each other. From this standpoint, the acceptance of full church communion would signify also the mutual recognition of ministries.⁹⁴

The ecumenical dialogues of the 1970s contributed to a different and less polarised perception of apostolic succession, but did not overcome different evaluations of episcopal succession. Important for this development was an elaborated and more precise terminology, which made a broader and more inclusive understanding of the issue possible. Apostolicity was not exclusively identified with either order or doctrine, but understood as a mark of the whole Church. A distinction was made between apostolic succession and apostolic tradition, as well as between the apostolicity of the whole Church or the apostolic tradition and the apostolic succession of ministry. I refer to this later notion, as found in later drafts of the Faith & Order's BEM text,⁹⁵ as *episcopal succession*. The terminological development helped the churches to overcome earlier negative perceptions without, however, an ecumenical breakthrough or mutual recognition of ordained ministry.

A year after *The Ministry in the Church*, the World Council of Churches published *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (BEM)*,⁹⁶ generally known as the *Lima Report*, which tried to keep together both the value of episcopal succession and openness to those churches which, for various reasons, have not retained episcopal succession.

2.3.2. The Lima Report: Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry

In the history of the ecumenical movement, BEM is without doubt the most successful ecumenical document, both in its reception and how it has influenced many churches.⁹⁷ Its influence on the PCS is also significant.⁹⁸ The document can be seen as a summary of fifty years of the work of the Faith & Order Commission, and of an exhaustive working process during the 1970s.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Ibid., p273, §82.

⁹⁵ Gromada, *The Theology of Ministry in the Lima Document*, p164, 297.

⁹⁶ Faith & Order, 'Lima Report: Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry (BEM), 1982'.

⁹⁷ Faith & Order, *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982-1990*; Thurian, *Churches Respond to BEM*, 1986, I:Vol I-VI; Tanner, 'The Effect of BEM on the CoE'.

⁹⁸ See the footnotes in the PCS and Karttunen, 'Apostolische Kirche lebt den Glauben'.

⁹⁹ Cf. BEM, Comment, M§26. For the historical background to BEM, see Gromada, *The Theology of Ministry in the Lima Document*.

The method of the ‘Ministry’ part (M) of BEM is christological and pneumatological, and moves from ecclesiology (§1-6) to the specific question of ordained ministry, from what the churches agree on to the divisive question of “how the life of the church is to be ordered”.¹⁰⁰ Due to those divergent understandings, M challenges the churches to conversion and an open-minded search for the answer given in Christ and by the Holy Spirit.

The church in M is not defined in abstract terms but is understood, in a christological and pneumatological perspective, as a people called and sent by God “to proclaim and prefigure the Kingdom of God”.¹⁰¹ In the discussion that followed BEM from 1982 onwards, the document was criticised for a weak and under-developed ecclesiology.¹⁰² This critique would lead to the formulation of the Faith & Order document on ecclesiology in 2013: *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*.¹⁰³ However, to do justice to the ecclesiology of BEM, the three parts of the document have to be read together, which on a biblical basis understands the Church as a sacramental sign in the world.¹⁰⁴ M does not use the notion of *koinonia*, but the communal perspective is clear,¹⁰⁵ and becomes even clearer if M is read together with the ‘Baptism’ (B) and especially the ‘Eucharist’ (E) parts of the document, which describe the Church in a communal and sacramental perspective. Decisive for M’s understanding of ecclesiology and ordained ministry, and the relationship between them, is the personal perspective.¹⁰⁶ The whole church is called, and the individual is called and sent as a part of the Church. Among the members of the Church, the ordained minister has a particular responsibility in and for the Church.¹⁰⁷ As Christ chose and sent the apostles, he “continues through the Holy Spirit to choose and call persons into the ordained ministry”,¹⁰⁸ of which the chief responsibility “is to assemble and build up the body of Christ”.¹⁰⁹

In its description of ordained ministry, M discerns that in the New Testament there are different models of ministry, which developed in the second and third centuries through the Holy Spirit into the threefold ministry and “became established as the pattern of ordained ministry throughout the Church”.¹¹⁰ M comes to the conclusion that, despite the historic plurality of

¹⁰⁰ BEM, M§6. M has six sections: I. The calling of the whole people of God, II. The church and the ordained ministry, III. The forms of the ordained ministry, IV. Succession in the apostolic tradition, V. Ordination, VI. Towards a mutual recognition of ordained ministry.

¹⁰¹ BEM, M§4.

¹⁰² Faith & Order, *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry 1982-1990*, p87.

¹⁰³ WCC, Faith & Order, *The Church: Towards a Common Vision*.

¹⁰⁴ Thurian, ‘The Lima Document – The Event and Its Consequences’, p6ff.

¹⁰⁵ BEM, M§1-6, 26.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Gromada, *The Theology of Ministry in the Lima Document*, p386; Lanne, ‘Convergence on the Ordained Ministry’, p120.

¹⁰⁷ BEM, M§8.

¹⁰⁸ BEM, M§11.

¹⁰⁹ BEM, M§13.

¹¹⁰ BEM, M§19.

ministry in the church, and that also other forms of ministry have been blessed by the Holy Spirit, “the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as means for achieving it”.¹¹¹ M adopts a double approach here towards the sensitive question of the form of ministry, and offers a recommendation to the churches:

The traditional threefold pattern thus raises questions for all the churches. Churches maintaining the threefold pattern will need to ask how its potential can be fully developed for the most effective witness of the Church in this world. In this task churches not having the threefold pattern should also participate. They will further need to ask themselves whether the threefold pattern as developed does not have a powerful claim to be accepted by them.¹¹²

M avoids judgements about the historic development as *iure humano* or *iure divino*, or about the validity or otherwise of a specific ministry.¹¹³ Instead, the early undivided church is used as a focal point, and the threefold ministry is emphasised as both an *expression of* and a *means to achieve* the unity the churches are called to find. What has often been overlooked in the ecumenical discussion is that M does not only challenge churches without a threefold ministry;¹¹⁴ it also challenges the churches with a threefold ministry to find and express the full potential of the threefold ministry. The threefold ministry is thus a challenge to which all churches need to respond.¹¹⁵

The communal and personal dimension of the church is elaborated by M in these terms: “the ordained ministry should be exercised in a personal, collegial and communal way”.¹¹⁶ As a consequence, the bishop is at the centre of and serve the life and communion of the church:

Bishops preach the Word, preside at the sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. They have pastoral oversight of the area to which they are called. They serve the apostolicity and unity of the Church’s teaching, worship and sacramental life. They have the leadership in the Church’s mission. They relate the Christian community in their area to the wider church, and the universal Church to their community. They, in communion with the presbyters and deacons and the whole community, are responsible for the orderly transfer of ministerial authority in the Church.¹¹⁷

¹¹¹ BEM, M§22.

¹¹² BEM, M§25.

¹¹³ BEM, Comment, M§39.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Faith & Order, *Baptism, Eucharist & Ministry* 1982-1990, p125.

¹¹⁵ See BEM, Comment M§11, and Gromada, *The Theology of Ministry in the Lima Document*, p348.

¹¹⁶ BEM, M§26. In the comment on this paragraph, the three dimensions are taken from a recommendation made by the first World Conference on Faith & Order at Lausanne in 1927, based upon a recognition of the importance of the early church, and on how widespread the functions of the threefold ministry are in the major of Christian communions.

¹¹⁷ BEM, M§29.

As a servant of the “apostolicity and unity of the Church” and as one who is “responsible for the orderly transfer of ministerial authority”, the relationship between the bishop and apostolic succession is established. Along with other ecumenical reports, M states that “the primary manifestation of apostolic succession is to be found in the apostolic tradition of the Church as a whole”.¹¹⁸ And “within the church the ordained ministry has a particular task of preserving and actualizing the apostolic faith. The orderly transmission of the ordained ministry is therefore a powerful expression of the continuity of the Church throughout history.”¹¹⁹ M notes that this powerful expression, together with the transmission of the Gospel and the life of the community, was one way to express and guard the continuity of the apostolic faith and communion.¹²⁰

Again the double approach in M is clear: it states that an increasing number of churches that have retained episcopal succession recognise that continuity in apostolic faith, worship, and mission have also been preserved in those churches that have not retained episcopal succession. But, at the same time, M states:

Those considerations do not diminish the importance of the episcopal ministry. On the contrary, they enable churches which have not retained the episcopate to appreciate the episcopal succession as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church. Today churches, including those engaged in union negotiations, are expressing willingness to accept episcopal succession as a sign of apostolicity of the life of the whole Church. Yet, at the same time, they cannot accept any suggestion that ministry exercised in their own tradition should be invalid until the moment that it enters into an existing line of episcopal succession. Their acceptance of the episcopal succession will best further the unity of the whole Church if it is part of a wider process by which the episcopal churches themselves also regain their lost unity.¹²¹

M takes a stand for the episcopal and threefold ministry, including ordination, as a “sacramental sign”.¹²² Simultaneously, M does not exclusively identify episcopal ordination in succession as the only valid ordination. In fact, it does not take a position for or against the validity of other forms of ordination, and its description of ordination as a sacramental sign is not exclusively related to episcopal ordination in succession. Rather, M implicitly adopts a similar emphasis to that of *Ministry in the Church*, which states that the validation of different ministries cannot “be answered exclusively in

¹¹⁸ BEM, M§35.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ BEM, M§36.

¹²¹ BEM, M§38.

¹²² BEM, M§41.

terms of canonical criteria of validity”,¹²³ when it describes episcopal succession as “a sign, though not a guarantee”.

The double approach of M, which includes the strategy of not speaking of ‘valid’ or ‘non-valid’ forms of ministry, is finally revealed in a suggestion that the churches mutually recognise each other. The churches are asked to make this recognition, but it is not said how the churches should overcome their different evaluations of apostolic succession. M states that:

In order to achieve mutual recognition, different steps are required of different churches. For example:

- a) Churches which have preserved the episcopal succession are asked to recognize both the apostolic content of the ordained ministry which exists in churches which have not maintained such succession and also the existence in these churches of a ministry of *episcopé* in various forms.
- b) Churches without the episcopal succession, and living in faithful continuity with the apostolic faith and mission, have a ministry of Word and sacrament, as is evident from the belief, practice, and life of those churches. These churches are asked to realize that the continuity with the Church of the apostles finds profound expression in the successive laying on of hands by bishops and that, though they may not lack the continuity of the apostolic tradition, this sign will strengthen and deepen that continuity. They may need to recover the sign of the episcopal succession.¹²⁴

The implementation of M’s recommendation is left to churches to sort out. That was considered in the Lutheran-Anglican dialogue preceding the Porvoo Conversations, which in the formulation of the PCS make extensively use of BEM and refer to it throughout the document.

2.3.3. The Anglican-Lutheran bilateral dialogue

After the horrors of two world wars, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) was established in 1947 in Lund in Sweden. At the assembly in Lund, there was a general wish to find reconciliation and new ways to live and work for Christian communion and solidarity.¹²⁵ For the Anglican churches there was a need to find reconciliation with the German churches. The establishment of the LWF was followed in 1948 by the establishment of the WCC, which further reinforced the ecumenical endeavour globally. The new Lutheran world organisation enabled a global Anglican-Lutheran dialogue that had previously not been possible.¹²⁶ In the mid-1960s this was further influenced

¹²³ LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p273, §82. See further Chapter 14.

¹²⁴ BEM, M§53.

¹²⁵ Schjørring et al., *From Federation to Communion*, p3ff.

¹²⁶ For a concise and well written presentation of the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue see; Repo, ‘Apostolic Faith and Episcopal Ministry’.

by the new ecumenical engagement of the RCC, which favoured bilateral dialogue as an ecumenical instrument.

Following a few preparatory meetings from 1963 onwards, the LWF and the Executive Committee of the Lambeth Conference established an Anglican-Lutheran commission in 1968. It met four times between 1970 and 1972, resulting in the *Pullach Report*¹²⁷ – primarily an inventory and comparative document whose purpose was to describe the traditions in as representative a way as possible.¹²⁸ Extensive theological agreement is noted about Scripture, the creeds, the role of tradition, confessional formularies, ecclesiology, word and sacrament, liturgy, and apostolic ministry, but the commission could not find consensus on episcopacy.

As in the Lutheran-Roman Catholic *Malta Report* of the same year, but not in as much detail, apostolicity is related primarily to the church as a whole, and “the succession of apostolicity through time is guarded and given contemporary expression in and through a wide variety of means, activities and institutions”.¹²⁹ One of those means is the ordained ministry. Pullach makes a distinction between the exercise of episcopé and the episcopal office. The Anglicans stated that they could “not foresee full integration of ministries (full communion) apart from the historic episcopate”.¹³⁰ The Lutherans argued that “the historic episcopate should not become a necessary condition for interchurch relations or church union”.¹³¹

The Pullach report was an attempt to bring the Lutheran emphasis of the continuity of apostolic doctrine together with the Anglican emphasis on episcopal succession;¹³² but it does not go all the way. The document presents a general agreement on episcopacy, but does not overcome the real differences. The *substantive apostolicity* described in Malta is not as developed in Pullach, and the terminology is still not as exact as it would later become. The reason for this is that the method is primarily comparative, and the report does not describe a common understanding.

¹²⁷ ALIC, ‘Pullach’, p23f, §5ff.

¹²⁸ Ibid., p24, §10.

¹²⁹ Ibid., p34, §74.

¹³⁰ Ibid., p36, §87.

¹³¹ Ibid., p37, §89.

¹³² Ibid.; In a comment on the dialogue, the Anglican chairman, bishop Ronald Williams, emphasised that: “In the report, an attempt is made to widen the scope of the phrase, and hence of the meaning of ‘apostolic succession’. Anglicans would not, if asked, have imagined the only meaning of that phrase was succession of ministers by ordination of bishops in the ‘succession’. They would have wanted to include faith in the apostolic gospel (expressed in the creeds), acceptance of the Scriptures (which anchored the patristic church to the apostolic church) and the acceptance of the gospel sacraments. But as a fact of history these other forms of continuity (focussed in the Lambeth Quadrilateral) have been taken as marks of ‘catholicity’ rather than of ‘apostolicity’. The adjective ‘apostolic’ happens to have been attached to the continuity of the *ministry*. It can only be widened in its application by a conscious effort to merge apostolicity into catholicity, and *vice versa*.” ‘A personal note by the Anglican Chairman’, bishop Ronald Williams, p41.

The next step in the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue was taken at a regional level in Europe and North America respectively. In Europe, the *Anglican-Lutheran European Regional Commission* (ALERC) met from 1980 and published the *Helsinki Report (Helsinki)* in 1982 – the same year as BEM, but after it; and so BEM influenced the Helsinki understanding of ordained ministry, episcopacy, apostolicity, and succession. Based on the theological agreement on justification, baptism, eucharist, and ministry, the report states that there are no longer any serious obstacles on the way towards establishing full communion, and recommends that the churches acknowledge each other as true churches of Christ.¹³³

Helsinki notes that both Anglicans and Lutherans see the ordained ministry as instituted by God, and that, within the broader ecumenical movement, the discussions about ordained ministry as one or threefold “no longer imply a deeper ecclesiological difference”.¹³⁴ The ministry of the whole people of God as the common priesthood of all baptised believers is emphasised, and episcopal ministry is understood as in BEM.¹³⁵ Without using the word, Helsinki elaborates a substantive understanding of apostolicity, and notes that “Anglicans and Lutherans participate in the growing ecumenical agreement that the *apostolicity* of the Church, and the apostolic succession, which serves this apostolicity, are expressed and maintained by a variety of elements and activities”.¹³⁶ Among those elements the report includes Scripture, the ecumenical creeds, the sacraments and the liturgical life of the church, the pastoral ministry of Word and Sacrament, and the the Church’s continuing participation in apostolic mission.

Apostolic succession is understood as “the way in which the continuity of the apostolic character and mission of the Church is served and maintained” through history and “cannot therefore be limited to the succession in episcopal consecrations and ordinations”.¹³⁷ Simultaneously, Helsinki emphasises that “the orderly transmission of the ordained ministry is one important element in the process of apostolic succession because it is a sign of the apostolic continuity of the Church and serves it”.¹³⁸ It is noted that there is a trend among non-episcopal Lutherans to re-adopt episcopal orders, and that:

These facts and developments indicate a wide agreement in the understanding of ordained ministry. Furthermore, even in matters of former disagreements new convergence has been achieved, e.g. in the more comprehensive understanding of apostolic succession and in the affirmation of the essential role of *episcopé* within and for the Church. Concerning the question of the *historical succession* of bishops, there still remains a difference between us because,

¹³³ ALERC, ‘Helsinki’, p64ff, §61ff.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p56, §32, 35.

¹³⁵ See BEM, M§13, 28

¹³⁶ ALERC, ‘Helsinki’, p57, §38.

¹³⁷ Ibid., p58, §39.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

while Anglicans cannot envisage any form of organic union without the historic episcopate, Lutheran churches are not able to attribute to the historic episcopate the same significance for organic church union. Yet even this remaining difference, when seen in the light of our agreements and convergences, cannot be regarded as a hindrance to closer fellowship between our Churches.¹³⁹

The earlier differences are said to be reduced by new developments on both sides. Helsinki quotes BEM, noting that Lutherans are increasingly prepared to appreciate episcopal succession as an important sign of the apostolicity of the church, but without diminishing their earlier tradition. Anglicans, on their side, are more prepared to recognise, in the words of BEM, that “continuity in apostolic faith, worship and mission has been preserved in churches which have not retained the form of historic episcopate”.¹⁴⁰ Helsinki does not speak about an organic Anglican-Lutheran union, but of *closer fellowship*, that would later be formalised in the Meissen agreement.

The two main issues, earlier referred to, of the ecumenical discussion on apostolic succession are also obvious in Helsinki. On the one hand, there is an extended agreement on ordained ministry, episcopacy, and apostolic succession. On the other hand, the question of how the churches with different orders and evaluations can be united is not answered. The second question depends on the first. Helsinki elaborates the doctrinal issues in the wider context of the challenges arising from the situation and the mission of Anglican and Lutheran churches in present-day Europe, and states that mission is the proper context for the search for unity. The link in Helsinki between mission and unity is not new. In fact, it was one of the starting points for the modern ecumenical movement. However, Helsinki links the mission of the church in a new way to the apostolicity of the church in the sense of *being sent*.¹⁴¹ This new perspective, which presupposes a more elaborated ecclesiology, was important for the formulations of the *Niagara Report* and the PCS.

The next Anglican-Lutheran dialogue, *Cold Ash* in 1983, was formulated at a global level, and considered how unity should be understood. The report noted that “the last fifteen years have seen a remarkable convergence between the Anglican and Lutheran Communion and their member churches”,¹⁴² and recommended that the two communions move with urgency towards the fullest possible recognition and the goal of full communion. The concept of full communion was defined as:

A relationship between two distinct churches or communions. Each maintains its own autonomy and recognizes the catholicity and apostolicity of the other,

¹³⁹ Ibid., p59, §43.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid. Helsinki quotes BEM, M§38.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p58f, §38, p61ff, §52ff.

¹⁴² ALIC, ‘Cold Ash Report 1983’, p69, §1.

and each believes the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith. ... To be in full communion means that churches become interdependent while remaining autonomous. One is not elevated to be the judge of the other nor can it remain insensitive to the other, neither is each body committed to every secondary feature of the tradition of the other. Thus the corporate strength of the churches is enhanced in love, and an isolated independence is restrained. ... Full communion carries implications which go beyond sharing the same eucharist. The eucharist is a common meal, and to share in it together has implications for a sharing of life and of common concerns for the mission of the Church. To be in full communion implies a community of life, and exchange and a commitment to one another in respect of major decisions on questions of faith, order, and morals. It implies, where churches are in the same geographical area, common worship, study, witness, evangelism, and promotion of justice, peace and love.¹⁴³

This concept of ‘full communion’ is close to the understanding of unity developed in the 19th century by the Anglican High Church school and the Oxford movement, intending to avoid cross-jurisdiction within the same geographical area. Cold Ash does not elaborate whether full communion implies any common structure, but as autonomy and interdependence are emphasised it seems that ‘unity’ is understood as primarily spiritual, in the sense non-material and without any common structures for decision making and discernment, even though it is also emphasised that “full communion carries implications which go beyond sharing the same eucharist”.¹⁴⁴ Still, full communion is said to mean a deeper unity than eucharistic hospitality, pulpit and altar fellowship, and mutual recognition of ordinations – as in the Leuenberg Agreement, for example. Since 1983, ‘full communion’ has remained a contested concept, and it has been difficult to find a commonly-held definition.¹⁴⁵

In order to realise full communion between the Anglican and Lutheran churches Cold Ash finally recommends that the churches “arrange a joint consultation (with advisers from their major dialogue partners) on the relation between Apostolic Succession, the Ministry of the whole People of God, Episcopacy and Historic Episcopate, taking the BEM treatment of this issue as its framework together with the results of appropriate bilateral dialogues”.¹⁴⁶

After Cold Ash the LWF and ACC appointed a joint commission, the *Anglican-Lutheran International Commission* (ALIC), which met for a first preparatory meeting in Wimbledon, England, in October 1986. The committee first summarised the ecumenical dialogue so far, and proposed a consul-

¹⁴³ Ibid., p76f, §25ff. The second sentence of this quotation is derived from the Anglican-Old Catholic Bonn agreement of 1931 Anglican & Old Catholic Churches, ‘Bonn Agreement’, p37, §1.

¹⁴⁴ ALIC, ‘Cold Ash Report 1983’, p77, §27.

¹⁴⁵ E.g. ALIC, ‘Niagara’, Appendix III, Report by the ALICC, Wimbledon 1986, p122, §12.

¹⁴⁶ ALIC, ‘Cold Ash Report 1983’, p79, Recommendations II (d).

tation on the “relationship between Apostolic succession, the Ministry of the whole people of God, Episcopacy and the historic episcopate”, with the theme “*Episcopé* in relation to the Mission of the Church Today”.¹⁴⁷ The consultation was held one year later, in Niagara Falls, Canada, in September 1987, and produced the Niagara report.

The Niagara report is an extended summary of earlier ecumenical documents, but also shows development as a systematically comprehensive document. There are some important prerequisites for this development. As a summary of earlier ecumenical documents, Niagara widened the discussion about ordained ministry and apostolic succession, which is understood in relation to the whole church and the substantive understanding of apostolicity. As earlier in Pullach, episcopacy is here related to the question of *episcopé*, making it possible to see that churches without episcopacy can nevertheless have the function of *episcopé*. For the first time in the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue, the christological method breaks through, and the document is written in ecclesiological and missiological perspective, as the theme for the consultations indicates.

None of the earlier Anglican-Lutheran reports was written in ecclesiological perspective, even though ecclesiology was discussed. Pullach and Helsinki start with the parts of the church and moves to the understanding of the whole church and its situation in present-day Europe. Cold Ash focuses mainly on the meaning of ‘full communion’. In contrast, Niagara starts with ecclesiology and understands the individual parts in the light of the whole. In comparison with the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue in the early 20th century, the goal of the dialogue is not only pulpit and altar fellowship and the exchange of ordained ministers, but full communion, although it is not clearly stated what this really means. This ambiguity is noted in the preparatory text for Niagara, but is not further discussed.¹⁴⁸

The emphasis in Helsinki on the need for evangelisation in Europe is turned in Niagara into a missiological understanding of the church, called and sent into the world. This missiological perspective is also important for how apostolicity is elaborated. The ecclesiological and missiological perspectives are combined in Niagara as the hermeneutical context of *episcopé* and apostolic succession – a move that was to be important for the formulation of the PCS. With those prerequisites, Niagara presents a joint Anglican-Lutheran understanding, set out in five chapters that deal in turn with *The Nature of the Church and its Mission*, *Requirements for the Church’s Mission*, *The Truths we Share*, *Applications to Anglicans and Lutherans*, and finally *Practical Steps*.

Niagara presents ecclesiology in the perspective of the Trinity, the economy of salvation, and mission for the Kingdom of God (Part I). The church

¹⁴⁷ ALIC, ‘Niagara’, p122, Appendix III: Report by the ALICC, Wimbledon 1986, §12.

¹⁴⁸ See Ibid., Appendix III, Report by the ALICC, Wimbledon 1986, p122, §12.

is understood as a *koinonia* sent into the world and “given the necessary gifts. God’s plan is the unification of all things in Christ; that, and nothing less, is the goal.”¹⁴⁹ It is emphasised that “every member of the Church is an integral part of its witness and its mission; and every member has received a gift of the Holy Spirit so that the whole may flourish”.¹⁵⁰ With reference to BEM M§9 and 34, Niagara states that among those members some are given a special authoritative responsibility, which is not about status, but about the bestowal of responsibilities, which are to be exercised in a way that serves the mission of the whole church.¹⁵¹

In the same ecclesiological framework, and as a part of the mission of the whole church, Niagara elaborates the substantive understanding of apostolic succession and as opposed to any mechanical understanding of episcopal succession:

Study of the life of the early Christian communities reflected in the pages of the New Testament should make it unthinkable for us to isolate ordination at the hands of someone in linear succession to the apostles as the sole criterion of faithfulness to the apostolic commission. ... Thus to speak of ‘apostolic succession’ is to speak primarily of characteristics of the whole Church; and to recognize a Church as being ‘in the apostolic succession’ is to use not one criterion of discernment, but many (cf. BEM, M 35). ... It is therefore essential for those Christian Churches which do not enjoy full communion with one another to reappropriate the substantial basis for understanding the apostolic mission of the Church with which the New Testament provides us. Mission indeed comes to special expression in the Church’s apostolicity. For apostolicity means that the Church is sent by Jesus to be for the world, to participate in his mission and therefore in the mission of the One who sent Jesus, to participate in the mission of the Father and the Son and through the dynamic of the Holy Spirit.¹⁵²

On this ecclesiological basis of the Church as sent in to the world, Niagara then turns to *the Requirements for the Church’s mission* (Part II), including the relation between the apostolicity of the church and episcopal ministry. The report sketches the praise of the community, its faithfulness and continuity, its disciplined life together, its activity of nurture, and its sense of goal and direction. According to Niagara, all those requirements for the mission are given in Christ and need to be made real in history through symbolic acts and structures.¹⁵³ The document describes the historical development of the episcopal ministry and its function or role in the church, which is understood as communal with two dimensions: spatial and temporal. According to Niag-

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p92, §15.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p92, §17.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p93, §19.

¹⁵² Ibid., p93, §20f.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p99, §41.

ara, it is essential to the life and mission of the church that there is an effective connection between the universal and the local. However:

The mere presence of a bishop as what is said to be ‘a focus of unity’ will not *guarantee* the preservation of *koinonia* between local and universal; nor will the absence of such a bishop entail its destruction. The case is the same in relation to continuity. ‘Apostolic succession in the episcopal office does not consist primarily in an unbroken chain of those ordaining to those ordained, but in a succession in the presiding ministry of a church which stands in the continuity of apostolic faith and which is overseen by the bishop in order to keep it in the communion of the Catholic and Apostolic Church’ (LRCJC, *The Ministry in the Church*, 62). ... The fact of bishops does not by itself guarantee the continuity of apostolic faith. A material rupture in the succession of presiding ministers does not by itself guarantee a loss of continuity in apostolic faith. What evaluation is, then, to be given of a situation in which there is a material rupture in the succession of presiding ministers in the name of preserving the continuity of apostolic faith? Clearly, no simple answers can be given.¹⁵⁴

With the question in the end of this quotation, Niagara refers to the complex Reformation development, and states that it is:

Clearly noted that the Reformers believed themselves to act in this manner in an emergency situation, appealing to Jerome’s position on the original unity of the office of bishop and presbyter. The authority of a bishop’s office is thus present in the pastors. The succession of a presiding ministry is thus preserved, though in an unaccustomed form. There was no objection to the office of bishop as such, as the Augsburg confession testifies.¹⁵⁵

After reflection on ecclesiology, missiology, and apostolic succession, Niagara describes in twenty sections the doctrinal consensus,¹⁵⁶ before, in the fourth chapter, it asks Anglicans and Lutherans for changes. The Lutherans are urged to accept that: 1. All persons who exercise an ordained ministry of *episcopé* should receive the title bishop. 2. Bishops should be elected and consecrated for life or until retirement or resignation. 3. In the consecration, at least three bishops should lay their hands on the new bishop, and one or more of them should be from an Anglican church. Niagara gives the reason for this participation as an Anglican recognition of the existing ministries in the Lutheran churches and that, as affirmed in the LRCJC’s *The Ministry in the Church*, Lutherans have confessionally and historically recognised that episcopal succession is a valuable symbol of unity and continuity in the Church.¹⁵⁷ 4. It should become an un failing practice that only bishops preside at all ordinations of clergy.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p103, §53ff.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p105, §57. With reference to CA 28.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p105ff, §§60–80.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., p109, §91; reference to; LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, §§65, 66, 80.

The Anglican churches, in turn, are challenged to: 1. Make necessary canonical changes to acknowledge and recognise the full authenticity of the existing ministries of Lutheran churches. This is possible, according to Niagara, since apostolic succession in the episcopal office does not consist primarily in an unbroken chain of episcopal ordinations, “but in a succession in the presiding ministry of a church, which stands in the continuity of apostolic faith”.¹⁵⁸ Niagara states that this canonical revision is possible since “Anglicans are free to do this both by the grace and power of the Holy Spirit and because such action does not mean surrender of the gift of the historic episcopate. ‘Full communion’, the consequence of such acknowledgement and recognition, does not mean the organizational merger of Anglican and Lutheran Churches. Therefore Anglican Churches would continue to consecrate their own bishops and ordain their own clergy according to the ordinals now in use.”¹⁵⁹ 2. The Anglicans were urged to establish and welcome structures for collegial and periodic review with the purpose of evaluating and improving the bishop’s ministry, and 3. Regularly to invite Lutheran bishops to participate in the laying on of hands at the consecration of Anglican bishops.¹⁶⁰

Finally, in the fifth chapter the churches are challenged to take the necessary “practical steps” in order to realise full communion between the Anglican and Lutheran churches. These steps are emphasised as compatible with the steps proposed in the LRCJC document *Facing Unity* (1984).

While Niagara was a step forward as a joint understanding of ecclesiology, apostolicity, and succession, it leaves questions unanswered. Since Niagara is primarily concerned with *episcopé*, it does not really address the issue of episcopal succession and how churches with different traditions can be reconciled and united. In that sense Niagara mirrors the ecumenical discussion of the time on *episcopé*, understood as a function that may have various forms (episcopal, presbyteral etc.). A strength of such a perspective is that it may include churches differently ordered and that it avoids an oversimplified understanding of church and *episcopé*. However, a difference in Niagara, is that there is only one such form discussed and *episcopé* is understood as personally and episcopally exercised. In consequence Niagara recommended the Lutheran churches to establish a more clearly expressed episcopal ministry, while leaving the issue of episcopal succession for the future. The key question regarding episcopal succession is whether the *res* of apostolic succession can be present when the *signum* is absent. According to several ecumenical dialogues, the answer to that question is ‘yes’; but it is

¹⁵⁸ ALIC, ‘Niagara’, p110, §94; reference to; LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, §62.

¹⁵⁹ ALIC, ‘Niagara’, p110, §94.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p109ff, §§88–96.

not really explained how that could be,¹⁶¹ nor how the churches with either retained or a breach in episcopal succession can be reconciled.

A weakness in Niagara concerns the goal of ecumenism. According to Niagara, the goal is full communion, but in order not to lose the importance of episcopal succession and to be open to those churches without it, it limits the concept to a primarily spiritualised communion – in contrast to its own ecclesiology. The report does also note that it is not clear what ‘full communion’ means.¹⁶² Niagara did not succeed in reconciling the issue of episcopal succession, but stated that in consideration of the “commonly held apostolic faith ... the continued isolation, one from another, of those who exercise this office of *épiscopé* in our two churches is no longer tolerable and must be overcome”.¹⁶³ The problem was left to the regional dialogues to solve, and resulted in quite different approaches in the USA, Canada, and Northern Europe. The differences mirrors the different respective histories of the churches in Europe and in North America.¹⁶⁴ The European churches can demonstrate a material continuity with the pre-Reformation church, in a way that the churches in North America can not. This difference is formative for the churches. In my view, it is undeniable that the most thorough dialogues are the two in Europe, i.e. Meissen and PCS; while the two in North America, i.e. CCM and Waterloo, are examples of a “minimum for mutual recognition”.¹⁶⁵

2.3.4. The Meissen agreement

Before the Porvoo Conversations were initiated in 1989, the Meissen Common Statement between the *Bund der evangelischen Kirchen in der Deutsche Demokratische Republik* (the Federation of the Evangelical Churches in the German Democratic Republic), the *EKD – Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland* (the Evangelical Church of (West) Germany) and the CoE was published in 1988. The PCS notes that Meissen indicated “a growing common understanding of the Church”.¹⁶⁶ The Church is described as a reconciling community, a perspective only fully appreciated if the political circumstances under which it was written are noted.¹⁶⁷ The Meissen agreement is an important forerunner to the PCS, which developed the structure and content of Meissen. The closeness of the two agreements is not surprising since most of the Anglican representatives in the Meissen process also

¹⁶¹ Cf. earlier quotations from ALIC, ‘Niagara’; and from LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p273, §82. See also Chapters 14 and 15.

¹⁶² ALIC, ‘Niagara’, Appendix III, Report by the ALICC, Wimbledon 1986, p122, §12.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p104f, §59.

¹⁶⁴ For a comparison of these agreements, see Root, ‘Consistency and Difference’, p296ff.

¹⁶⁵ For a well formulated critique of Niagara, see Evans, ‘Episcopate and Episcopacy’, p286.

¹⁶⁶ PCS §4.

¹⁶⁷ EKD/CoE, ‘Meissen’, p132, §5.

served in the Porvoo Conversations.¹⁶⁸ The PCS is written, however, with other prerequisites. While the Porvoo churches are Lutheran and Anglican episcopally ordered churches, with similar history and many, both pre- and post-Reformation, links, both the Federation of Churches in East Germany and the EKD in West Germany were not churches, but federations of heterogeneous regional Lutheran, United, and Reformed churches.¹⁶⁹ Not all of those churches are episcopal, and those who are, are not in episcopal succession. Compared with earlier agreements, Meissen reaches the same level of communion as the agreement between the CoE and the western Nordic churches in 1951, and encouraged more flexible co-operation, but without solving the problems about episcopacy and ministerial inter-changeability. The English and German parties achieved a joint understanding of the requirements for unity, and stated:

We can already claim together that full, visible unity must include: a common confession of the apostolic faith in word and life. ... The sharing of one baptism, the celebrating of one eucharist and the service of a reconciled, common ministry. ... Bonds of communion which enable the Church at every level to guard and interpret the apostolic faith, to take decisions, to teach authoritatively, to share goods and to bear effective witness in the world.¹⁷⁰

The English and German parties did not reach a common understanding of what “reconciled, common ministry means” nor of how the unity of the church relates to episcopal succession, which the PCS does. Rather, episcopal succession is seen by the German parties as a hindrance to unity:

Lutheran, Reformed and United Churches, though being increasingly prepared to appreciate episcopal succession “as a sign of the apostolicity of the life of the whole Church”, hold that this particular form of *episcopé* should not become a necessary condition for ‘full, visible unity’. The Anglican understanding of full, visible unity includes the historic episcopate and full interchangeability of ministers. Because of this remaining difference our mutual recognition of one another’s ministries does not yet result in the full interchangeability of ministers. ‘Yet even this remaining difference, when seen in the light of our agreements and convergences, cannot be regarded as a hindrance to closer fellowship between our churches’.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁸ A small indication of the different assumptions of the conversations is that the foreword of Meissen appears above three names without ecclesiastical titles. The Anglican representative, Bishop David Tustin, did sign ‘*David Grimsby*’, i.e. with the name of his see, while the German representatives signed using their academic titles. The foreword to the PCS is signed by +*David Grimsby, Right Reverend David Tustin, Bishop of Grimsby*, and *Tore Furberg* (for some reason, without the + that is otherwise normally used by the Swedish episcopate), *Right Reverend Dr Tore Furberg, former bishop of Visby*.

¹⁶⁹ I am aware that there is a discussion about the ecclesiological character of EKD, see e.g. Herms, ‘Was heißt es, im Blick auf die EKD von ‚Kirche‘ zu sprechen?’, p97.

¹⁷⁰ EKD/CoE, ‘Meissen’, p133, §8.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p138, §16.

Behind the different approaches of Meissen and the PCS to the threefold ministry, episcopacy and episcopal succession are different unity concepts.¹⁷² In contrast to the PCS, the German Meissen parties define the criteria for unity as is done in the Leuenberg Agreement in 1973, which emphasises CA 7 – i.e., the Gospel and the Sacraments; but that is interpreted isolated without reference to the ordained ministry. Due to the divergent understandings of the requirements for unity, Meissen basically restates the position of Pullach in 1972. Even though Meissen does progress in other areas, it does not, unlike Niagara and later the PCS, go “beyond considering episcopal succession other than an unbroken chain of episcopal ordinations”.¹⁷³ Still, Meissen was an important document for the formulation of the PCS, in offering a particular structure of agreement, used by the Porvoo Conversations.

2.4. The political context of the formulation of the PCS

Before the content of the PCS is discussed, I will describe the political situation at the turn of the 1990s, because, that was the context in which the PCS was formulated. Three features of the political and cultural context in which the PCS was initiated and formulated are important: The increasing globalisation and movability of people, the challenges facing the churches in present-day Europe, and the fall of the Berlin Wall and the ending of the Cold War in 1989. Pullach had stated in 1972 that “the vast increase in tourism and all kinds of international travel, and the probable entry of Great Britain into the European Economic Community, provide an opportunity for greatly increased fellowship between Christians of our two traditions”.¹⁷⁴ That development continued during the 1970s and 1980s, and the European Economic Community was developing closer relationships between its members through the formation of the European Union (EU). The two chairmen of the Porvoo Conversations emphasised that in the new Europe the Porvoo churches had a key role to play.¹⁷⁵

In a report to the CoS’s Bishops’ conference and the Central Board about the Porvoo Conversations, the Porvoo delegate (later Bishop of Uppsala), Tord Harlin, described how the political situation in Europe had changed radically since the beginning of the conversations. The statement had therefore been “rewritten several times in line with the changes and the growing interest shown from the participating churches, not least the Lutheran churches in the Baltic region”.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷² Repo, ‘Apostolic Faith and Episcopal Ministry’, p38.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ ALIC, ‘Pullach’, p40, §105. See also PCS §1.

¹⁷⁵ PCS Foreword §1.

¹⁷⁶ CoS, Ecumenical officer Tord Harlin, ‘Report to the CoS’ Bishop’s Conference and the Central Committee’, p1. “Situationen i Europa har ändrats radikalt sedan samtalen inleddes.

The changed European context related to a new culture in which the distance between church and society was increasing. That challenge was addressed in both Helsinki and Niagara as in need of mission and evangelisation in an increasingly secularised Europe; in Eastern Europe in the form of collective materialism, and in the West in form of the individualistic and capitalistic system. The churches were also challenged by a new society in which people did not live in the same way as hundreds of years ago, with consequences for the pastoral life and work of the churches.¹⁷⁷ The abrupt fall of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War brought new challenges, with importance for the Porvoo churches. Europe – and especially Eastern Europe – suddenly found itself in a completely new situation, with fragile new nations and democracies. Old differences and tensions between the churches emerged again and, paradoxically, church division seemed to increase even as Europe was becoming more united. The fall of the Wall also meant that the implementation of old ecumenical agreements between the CoE and the Baltic churches became possible after the fifty years of Cold War separation, from 1939 to 1989.¹⁷⁸

As the 1990s approached, the need for evangelisation was emphasised. In 1988 the Lambeth Conference declared the 1990s a Decade of Evangelisation and Pope John Paul II called for the re-evangelisation of Europe. To answer these calls, there was a bid to create a pan-Protestant alliance in Germany, with attempts to draw the Anglican and Lutheran churches of Northern Europe into such an alliance.¹⁷⁹ The Porvoo churches declined that invitation, and initiated the Porvoo Conversations as a way to deepen the communion of those churches, rather than cementing the divisions between the churches.¹⁸⁰

The globalisation process has had the consequence that the importance of nation-states has diminished, and their identities need to be redefined. The changed role and identity of the nation-state had consequences for those Porvoo churches that as state churches traditionally had close links with the nation-state. Most of the Porvoo churches could be seen as political projects in the 16th century, when the nation-states were established and the kings and princes of Europe claimed absolute sovereignty over their dominions. The changed political situation challenged the Porvoo churches to find their identity in relation to the other Porvoo churches, rather than in relation to their own nation-state. Moreover, the Anglican and Lutheran churches are each

Inledningen har därför skrivits om flera gånger i takt med förändringarna och det växande intresse som visats från deltagande kyrkor, inte minst från de lutherska kyrkorna i Baltikum.”

¹⁷⁷ ALERC, ‘Helsinki’, p61f, §53ff.

¹⁷⁸ PCS §2; see also Part IV, Appendix.

¹⁷⁹ Tanner, ‘Mission: Strategies and Prospects’, December 1996; also published in Tanner, ‘Mission: Strategies and Prospects’, April 1998.

¹⁸⁰ PCS §5, 60f.

part of world communions that goes beyond the European context, challenging every kind of exclusivist claim from the European Union.¹⁸¹

Another important development – not part of the political context, but nevertheless of importance for the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue – was that towards the end of the 20th century the general trend among non-episcopal Lutheran churches was to adopt an episcopal structure. Most of the larger Lutheran churches in Africa and Asia have had their bishops ordained in episcopal succession.¹⁸²

2.5. The Porvoo Common Statement

2.5.1. The beginning of the Porvoo Conversations

In the Foreword to the PCS, the two chairmen state that “the immediate stimulus to move beyond the earlier agreements came from the personal initiative of Archbishop Robert Runcie (Canterbury) and Archbishop Bertil Werkström (Uppsala)”.¹⁸³ The two chairmen refer to a couple of meetings and initiatives during the years preceding the launch of the formal Porvoo process in 1989.

In 1985 the CoS’s *Commission of Inter-Church and Ecumenical Affairs* established a working group under the chairmanship of Dean Lars Österlin, to deal with renewed and deepened dialogue with the CoE based on the 1920 agreement. An alternative was to invite all the Nordic churches for a common conversation with the CoE. In December 1985 the issue was further discussed when, on behalf of Archbishop Runcie, Canons Christopher Hill and Martin Reardon visited Linköping (where Lars Österlin was dean) and Uppsala.¹⁸⁴ At the same time, it was clear that it was not yet right for the CoE to initiate an immediate dialogue with the CoS (and ideally with the other Nordic churches as well) while the Meissen conversations were ongoing and the CoE was in the process of agreeing on a new canon, “Of Relations with other Churches” (Canon B43).¹⁸⁵

In April the following year, Archbishop Werkström wrote a letter to the Nordic Primates and suggested deepened relations with the CoE, and to ask whether it were possible to agree upon a common “policy for our connections with the Anglicans” by establishing a Nordic consultative group, to which each church would appoint two representatives.¹⁸⁶ The letter was followed up at the next Nordic Primates’ meeting in Turku on 10 September

¹⁸¹ Cf. PCS, Chapter I: *Setting the Scene*.

¹⁸² Brodd, ‘Ordination’, p844; ALERC, ‘Helsinki’, p58, §41.

¹⁸³ PCS Foreword, §3.

¹⁸⁴ Hill, ‘CoE and the PCS’; Tustin, ‘The Background and Genesis of the PCS’, p3ff.

¹⁸⁵ Harlin, ‘Samtalen mellan Church of England och de nordiska och baltiska lutherska kyrkorna’, p183ff.

¹⁸⁶ Harlin, ‘Nordic Preparations for the Porvoo Process’, p201. Quote from the same article.

1987. At the meeting, Archbishop Werkström intended to discuss the issue, but also to reserve “the right for the CoS to develop bilateral relations with the CoE, in order not to take a step backwards in the development of inter-communion”.¹⁸⁷ In the meantime, the Meissen Common Statement had been launched in February 1987 in London, in October 1987 the *Niagara Conversations* took place (published in 1988), and inspired the plans further.

The original intention of a simple bi-lateral dialogue between the CoE and the CoS (alternatively, with all the Nordic churches) developed in the end into a regional conversation for all the Anglican-Lutheran churches in Northern Europe. In itself the dialogue had important ecclesiological implications, as it aimed to create a regional communion. The geographical extension, and the number of participating churches, was a practical expression of Helsinki; emphasising the churches’ responsibility and the challenge to engage in God’s mission to the nations in a changing Northern Europe. The missiological motivation of the Porvoo Conversations is expressed in the PCS, as well as in its official title: *Together in Mission and Ministry – The Porvoo Common Statement with Essays on Church and Ministry in Northern Europe*. The name, originally suggested by the bishop of Oslo, Andreas Aarflot,¹⁸⁸ demonstrates an awareness of the importance that those churches and their visible and corporate unity could have for the life and development of Northern Europe.¹⁸⁹

Widening the conversation from a bi-lateral dialogue between the CoS and the CoE also meant that the dialogue became more complex and, in practice, multilateral. If all the Lutheran churches had been like the CoS, there would have been no need for the *Porvoo solution*,¹⁹⁰ which shows that the differences were as great between the Lutheran churches as those between the Lutherans and the Anglicans. Despite the multilateral character of the dialogue, it was treated as a bi-lateral dialogue in the statement and in the Porvoo debates. The multilateral character is easily discernable in the PCS’ treatment of the different traditions about episcopal succession.¹⁹¹ Simultaneously, the PCS regards the churches as two counterparts: one Lutheran and one Anglican.¹⁹² This tension is also present in the Porvoo debate.¹⁹³ A reason for the bilateral approach – besides its background in the Swedish-English dialogue – is probably that the Porvoo process was regarded as a regional expression of the international Lutheran-Anglican dialogue. While this is true, it should also be noted that the LWF and the Anglican Communion are not equivalent entities. While the Anglican Communion is a sacramental

¹⁸⁷ Quotation from *ibid.*, p202.

¹⁸⁸ Aarflot, ‘Letter to Bishop David Tustin’.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. PCS §13.

¹⁹⁰ For a definition of the concept see Chapter 1.3.

¹⁹¹ E.g. PCS §34.

¹⁹² E.g. PCS Foreword §9, PCS §31, 32.

¹⁹³ See below in chapters 3.6.4., 4.2.2.

ecclesial communion that sprang from the growth of the British Empire and the CoE, held together through its members' relationship with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lambeth Conference,¹⁹⁴ the LWF is a federation of churches that can be very different from one another, and have little or no common history – although the LWF has initiated a process to grow towards a more communal understanding.¹⁹⁵

In December 1987 the Nordic Consultative Group held its first meeting.¹⁹⁶ It agreed to recommend that the churches also bring in the Baltic churches. The second meeting of the group took place in Uppsala on 3 June 1988, and decided that the newly-appointed director for the Nordic Ecumenical Council,¹⁹⁷ Ola Tjørhom, be given the task of contacting the CoE formally on behalf of the Nordic churches. The invitation resulted in an Anglican-Lutheran preparatory group meeting in Oslo, 16-20 December 1988.¹⁹⁸ The original participants in the conversations came from the churches of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Latvia, Estonia and England. This group was joined by representatives from the churches of Lithuania, Wales, Scotland and Ireland.¹⁹⁹ The official theological conversations were held from 1989 to 1992, with meetings of a small drafting group taking place between them.²⁰⁰ The final text was agreed upon unanimously on 13 October 1992 at Järvenpää, and entitled the Porvoo Common Statement “after the name of the Finnish city in whose cathedral” the group “had celebrated the eucharist together on the previous Sunday”.²⁰¹ The communion was expected to be made concrete as soon as two of the dialogue churches had signed the Porvoo Declaration (PD).²⁰² This was done in 1996 by ten of the original twelve churches in the Cathedrals of Trondheim in Norway, Tallinn in Estonia, and in Westminster Abbey in London, England.²⁰³

My presentation of the content of the PCS will be thematic, broadly following the structure of the PCS. I will begin with a description of its method, terminological strategy, and structure, followed by the various themes that make up the PCS.

¹⁹⁴ Booty, Knight, and Sykes, *The Study of Anglicanism*.

¹⁹⁵ Schjørring et al., *From Federation to Communion*.

¹⁹⁶ Harlin, ‘Nordic Preparations for the Porvoo Process’, p201.

¹⁹⁷ The *Nordic Ecumenical Council* was instituted in 1940 in Sigtuna and facilitated research, information and conferences related to ecumenical relationships between the Nordic churches and beyond. The Council played an important role in the Porvoo Conversations and in the process that lead to the churches’ approval of the PD. The council was abolished in 2003.

¹⁹⁸ Harlin, ‘Nordic Preparations for the Porvoo Process’, p202f.

¹⁹⁹ PCS Foreword §7.

²⁰⁰ PCS Foreword §5, *Together in Mission and Ministry*, p34ff.

²⁰¹ PCS Foreword §8.

²⁰² PCS Foreword §11. CoE, CCU, ‘The Porvoo Agreement: Recent Developments’, p1ff.

²⁰³ CoE, CCU, ‘Lutheran-Roman Catholic-Anglican Relations’, p21f.

2.5.2. Aim and method of the PCS

The aim of the PCS is the visible unity of the Church of Christ,²⁰⁴ and the PCS characterises itself ecclesologically as a text “about the nature of the Church and its unity”.²⁰⁵ The unity that is described is primarily for those churches that have participated in the Porvoo Conversations, but at the same time the Porvoo Conversations regards the PCS as “a step towards the visible unity which all churches committed to the ecumenical movement seek to manifest. We do not regard our move to closer communion as an end in itself, but as part of the pursuit of a wider unity.”²⁰⁶ The two chairmen describe the purpose of the statement, asked for earlier in the Niagara Report:

The aim of these [Porvoo] Conversations was to move forward from our existing piecemeal agreements towards the goal of visible unity. By harvesting the fruits of previous ecumenical dialogues we hoped to express a greater measure of common understanding, and to resolve the longstanding difficulties between us about episcopacy and succession. We found that we had similar histories and faced similar challenges in contemporary society, and that there were no essential differences between us in the fields of faith, sacramental life or ministry (each church already being episcopal in structure).²⁰⁷

Since the remaining problem between the Porvoo churches was the question about episcopal succession, this became the focus of the PCS. Other issues had already been resolved in the earlier Anglican-Lutheran dialogue.

The aim reveals the method used in the PCS. Read in isolation from earlier ecumenical documents, the method of the PCS cannot easily be discerned. Instead, the method is taken for granted. Based on earlier agreements, the Porvoo Conversations was able to express a joint understanding of ecclesiology, doctrine and ordained ministry and then, on this basis, to deal with the question of how to reconcile the different claimed traditions of apostolic succession. In this perspective, apostolic succession is exclusively identified with neither episcopal succession nor doctrine, but is understood as *substantive apostolicity* (a term that does not occur in the PCS), including both doctrine and episcopal succession in an ecclesiological whole. Through this method, *unity through a more profound understanding*, the PCS aims to give practical expression to earlier agreements and to transform the churches into visible unity.

It is important to see that the aim of the PCS reflects a particular understanding of the church’s unity and the church’s division. The ambition of the PCS is not to replace traditional Anglican and Lutheran ecclesiology,²⁰⁸ nor to subordinate the one to the other, but to deepen the ecclesiology into a

²⁰⁴ PCS Foreword, §6.

²⁰⁵ PCS §14.

²⁰⁶ PCS §60.

²⁰⁷ PCS Foreword §6.

²⁰⁸ Cf. PCS §32d.

more authentic and evangelic expression, in order to embrace both traditions in a common ecclesiology. This understanding of the unity of the church – as something beyond,²⁰⁹ but not contrary to the present denominations – reflects a concept of unity in the PCS that understands unity to be given by and found in Christ. The method in the PCS is christological and pneumatological, in trinitarian perspective, as described above in section 2.1. about ecumenical method.

In *Together in Mission and Ministry* the historical essays are written in comparative perspective; but the perspective in the PCS reflects the aim of the method to express a joint *deeper understanding*. Though the opening section of the third chapter, *What we agree in faith*, compares the Lutheran and Anglican perceptions of the faith, the bulk of the chapter presents a joint understanding, consolidating earlier statements. The process of achieving visible unity is not described in the PCS as a diplomatic process or as one of compromise or an uncritical blending of the two traditions. Rather, it is a process that aims to draw the participating churches more deeply into the richer reality of communion and unity in Christ given by the Holy Spirit.²¹⁰ This means that without the unity given in the Porvoo Communion, the churches concerned lack “something of that fullness which God desires for his people (Eph. 1: 23 and 3: 17-19)”.²¹¹ The process to receive this deeper ecclesiological identity and to be transformed from autonomous churches into the Porvoo Communion requires the participating churches to enter into a process of renewal,²¹² in order to find visible corporate unity and a richer, not poorer, ecclesial reality.

2.5.3. Terminological strategy in the PCS

An important methodical aspect of the PCS is that the Porvoo Conversations consciously avoided controversial concepts that are easily misunderstood, not least because they often have denominational and confessional connotations. This is primarily not a matter of clever diplomatic strategy, but an expression of the ecumenical striving to find new theological expressions for the faith given in and by Christ. This strategy is crucial for understanding the PCS. Since the PCS’s perspective is different, it is risky to look too intently for traditional terminology in its formulations. If such a search were undertaken in a one-dimensional way, it could lead to misunderstandings of the PCS. The strategy may be understood in two different ways: one is that the meaning of certain terminology is replaced by a *deeper understanding* that

²⁰⁹ PCS §22.

²¹⁰ PCS §§21, 28.

²¹¹ PCS §54.

²¹² Cf. PCS §33; see further in Part IV, Chapter 16 about the implementation of the PCS/PD.

makes the original terminology superfluous; or conversely, that if a particular terminology is not used, this does not mean that the concept is absent.

An example of the former is the concept of *full communion*, found in Cold Ash and later in Niagara, but not used in the PCS, since it has been much debated what it really means.²¹³ It occurs once in the PCS, in a quotation from a document of the LWF;²¹⁴ but it is otherwise not used. In a 1989 report about the Porvoo process, the delegate Tord Harlin noted that the Conversation avoided using the term *full communion*, and would probably use *fuller communion* and *fuller visible unity* instead.²¹⁵ In the end none of those expressions was used; nor was the corresponding terminology in Meissen, which is *full, visible unity*.²¹⁶ The PCS described the goal of the dialogue as the *visible unity* of the Church of Christ.²¹⁷

Terminology of the second sort described earlier is *iure divino* and *iure humano*. This terminology, which was at the centre of the Reformation debate, is not used in the PCS. During the twentieth century, as noted above,²¹⁸ the difference between *ius divinum* and *ius humanum* became less polarised, with consequences for how the threefold ministry and episcopal succession are treated. That the concepts are not used in the PCS does not mean that questions related to this terminology are not present in the document.

Related to the question of *iure divino* and *iure humano* is the question whether episcopal succession should be regarded (using the Anglican terminology) as *esse*, *bene esse*, or *plene esse*.²¹⁹ This terminology is not used in the PCS, which represents another ecclesiological approach.

For the same reason, the PCS does not make use of the concept *validity*, which has been commonly used in the discussion about a *right* or *valid* ordained ministry.²²⁰ *Validity* is a juridical term that aims to secure the true sacramental reality and community with Christ, while the perspective in and basis of the PCS is ecclesiological.

The term *sacramental* is not used in the PCS. An earlier draft of PCS did use the word *sacramental*, but it was later removed following comments

²¹³ E.g. ALIC, 'Niagara', Appendix III, Report by the ALICC, Wimbledon 1986, p122, §12.

²¹⁴ PCS §31, note 15: Quote from *I have heard the Cry of My People: Proceedings of the 8th Assembly of the LWF*, Curitiba, Brazil, 29 January – 8 February 1990, p107.

²¹⁵ Harlin, 'Samtalen mellan Church of England och de nordiska och baltiska lutherska kyrkorna', p186; Furberg, 'Kyrkogemenskap', p35.

²¹⁶ EKD/CoE, 'Meissen', p133, §8.

²¹⁷ The term 'visible unity' is already present in the *Pullach report* §53, but not defined. For an overview of how the Anglican-Lutheran dialogues have understood unity, see Anglican-Lutheran International Working Group, 'Growth in Communion', p301ff, §111–121.

²¹⁸ See e.g. LRCJC, 'Malta', p175, §31; see further Chapter 13.2.

²¹⁹ The distinction of *esse* and *bene esse* with respect to the episcopate can be traced back to Richard Hooker (1554-1600) and *plene esse* was used by H. W. Montefiore and Kenneth M. Carey in Carey, *The Historic Episcopate in the Fullness of the Church*.

²²⁰ Furberg, 'Kyrkogemenskap', p35.

from the western Nordic delegates.²²¹ The use of *sacramental* relates further to the Reformation debate about whether ordination confers a *character indelebilis* on the ordained and whether the ordained ministry should be understood ontologically or functionally, as well as what all this really means.²²²

2.5.4. The structure and contents of the PCS

The method and the ecclesiological basis for the PCS provide the structure of the document. That structure had earlier been worked out in *Meissen*, with a Common Statement setting out the rationale, followed by a short Declaration for synodical approval, coupled with arrangements for a continuation body to oversee implementation. The document has five chapters: it starts with the general situation of the churches (chapter I) and moves on to ecclesiology (chapter II), which establishes the basis for dealing with doctrine (chapter III) and the apostolicity of the whole church, apostolic ministry, and succession (chapter IV). The document begins with what the churches share in their history, life, ecclesiology, and doctrine (chapters I-III), thus laying the foundation for dealing with the decisive issue of apostolic succession. Chapter V contains the Porvoo Declaration (PD).

Chapter I – *Setting the Scene* – describes the current situation, the opportunities and challenges facing the churches in Europe. It describes the common ground of the churches and their joint history as part of the western catholic church, and how the churches are called to proclaim together the Christian hope, the healing love of God, and reconciliation, and their duty to serve the wider world.²²³ This already mirrors an ecclesiology that is described in Chapter II, *The Nature and Unity of the Church*. This chapter elaborates *God's Kingdom and the Mystery and Purpose of the Church*, which are related to each other since the Church as a communion is sent into the world as a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom of God. Chapter II focuses further on *The Nature of Communion and the Goal of Unity*. As a *koinonia/communio*, unity is vital for a Church that aims at the unity and communion of the whole world as the realisation of the Kingdom. As a sign of the Kingdom in the world, the visible unity of the church is crucial. To the unity and communion of the church belongs, according to the PCS, agreement in faith and a communal sacramental life served by a united ministry (elaborated in Chapters III-IV).

The joint understanding of doctrine is elaborated in Chapter III, *What we Agree in Faith*, which notes that the Porvoo churches “have at no time condemned one another as churches and have never formally separated. But a

²²¹ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p351; Podmore, ‘Porvoo: Text, Follow-up and Implications’, p6.

²²² See further Chapter 11.3.

²²³ PCS §13.

deeper realization of communion is certainly desirable.”²²⁴ The chapter is based on earlier ecumenical agreements such as BEM and the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue documents which, according to PCS, “all testify to a substantial unity in faith between Anglicans and Lutherans”.²²⁵ The text is also based on the bi-lateral Anglican and Lutheran dialogues with the RCC.

With the ecclesiological basis established, Chapter IV describes *Episcopacy in the Service of the Apostolicity of the Church*, and turns to the “longstanding problem about episcopal office and its relation to succession”.²²⁶ The chapter has five parts, and elaborates on the *Porvoo solution* to the problem. As in the whole document, the move is from ecclesiology as a whole towards the parts, demonstrated by the chapter’s title. Apostolicity is attributed to the Church as a whole and is understood in the substantive sense; it is not exclusively identified with one or a few signs or features of the church. The chapter elaborates on what apostolicity means and how it is concretely expressed in the apostolic tradition of the whole Church, of which ordained ministry and episcopal succession are signs. Based on the joint understanding so far expressed, the document turns in the latter part of Chapter IV to the problem: how to reconcile the three different traditions about apostolic succession found in the churches concerned.²²⁷

Chapter V contains the PD (§58) which, based on the whole PCS, declares an agreement that establishes the Porvoo Communion, when two or more churches approve the declaration; and further instructions for the liturgical celebration of the new communion (§59), and two paragraphs about wider ecumenical commitments (§60-61).

2.5.5. Church in the PCS

As in its ecumenical predecessors, and particularly in Niagara and Meissen,²²⁸ ‘church’ in the PCS is seen as a mystery, “as the body of Christ, as the pilgrim people of God, as fellowship (koinonia)”,²²⁹ in trinitarian, missiological, sacramental and eschatological perspective. Those four dimensions are kept together, and characterise the church as a communal people who is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Ecclesiology in the PCS is not reduced to one section, even though Chapter II deals in particular with the nature and unity of the church. Ecclesiology underlines the whole document. In that way, ecclesiology is the determining basis for the Porvoo approach to everything else in the church: doctrine, ordained ministry, and apostolic succession,

²²⁴ PCS §29.

²²⁵ PCS §30.

²²⁶ PCS §34.

²²⁷ For the three traditions see Chapter 1.2.

²²⁸ PCS §4.

²²⁹ PCS §5.

which simultaneously are expressions for and serve the unity and communion of the church.

The PCS is an example of ecumenical ecclesiology that goes back to the biblical understanding of the church as *koinonia*, beyond the various church traditions.²³⁰ The PCS does not understand ‘church’ as an isolated entity that exists for its own sake, but views it in the perspective of God’s economy of salvation. Under the title *God’s Kingdom and the Mystery and Purpose of the Church*, the PCS presents the church in the perspective of God’s will for the whole creation, and states: “God’s ultimate purpose and mission in Christ is the restoration and renewal of all that he has made, the coming of the Kingdom in its fullness.”²³¹ This gives the church its purpose, calling, and mission in the world:

To bring us to unity with himself, the Father sent his Son Jesus Christ into the world. Through Christ’s life, death and resurrection, God’s love is revealed and we are saved from the powers of sin and death (John 3:16-18). By grace received through faith we are put into a right relationship with God. We are brought from death to new life (Rom. 6:1-11), born again, made sons and daughters by adoption and set free for life in the Spirit (Gal. 4:5, Rom. 8:14-17). This is the heart of the gospel proclamation of the Church and through this proclamation God gathers his people together.²³²

The PCS emphasises the communal perspective of the Christian faith and the Church as a mystery and divine reality.²³³ Faith is seen as the recognition that the light has come into the world, and it is “faith, as life in communion with the triune God that brings us into, and sustains and nourishes us in, the common life of the Church, Christ’s body”.²³⁴ This is done through the proclamation of the gospel and the sacramental life of the church. The PCS states that the gospel and the church are necessarily related to each other, and that:

There is no proclamation of the word and sacraments without a community and its ministry. Thus, the communion of the Church is constituted by the proclamation of the word and the celebration of the sacraments, served by the ordained ministry. Through these gifts God creates and maintains the Church and gives birth daily to faith, love and new life.²³⁵

According to the PCS, the church is both *communio* with the Triune God and an instrument for God’s ultimate purpose with his creation. Without using the term the PCS describes the Church as a *sacramentum mundi*. As such:

²³⁰ PCS, §22; Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p14, 43.

²³¹ PCS §14.

²³² PCS §15.

²³³ PCS §§14ff, 20.

²³⁴ PCS §16.

²³⁵ PCS §17.

The Church, as communion, must be seen as instrumental to God's ultimate purpose. It exists for the glory of God to serve, in obedience to the mission of Christ, the reconciliation of humankind and of all creation (Eph. 1.10). Therefore the Church is sent into the world as a sign, instrument and foretaste of a reality which comes from beyond history – the Kingdom of God. The Church embodies the mystery of salvation, of a new humanity reconciled to God and to one another through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2.14, Col. 1.19-27). Through its ministry of service and proclamation it points to the reality of the Kingdom; and in the power of the Holy Spirit it participates in the divine mission by which the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world (1 John 4.14, cf. John 3.17).²³⁶

The PCS goes on to describe how the Holy Spirit gives diverse and complementary gifts to, and for the common good of, the whole people of God. The PCS describes, but with more biblically-motivated terminology, the general or common priesthood of all the baptised, and the vocation of all members to discover their gifts for building up the Church.²³⁷

The PCS understands the church as “a divine reality, holy and transcending present finite reality; at the same time, as a human institution, it shares the brokenness of human community in its ambiguity and frailty”.²³⁸ This means that the church is always “called to repentance, reform and renewal, and has constantly to depend on God’s mercy and forgiveness”.²³⁹ As a consequence of this dynamic and relational *koinonia* ecclesiology, the PCS does not base its ecclesiology on one or a few fundamentals, as the CA 7 or the Lambeth Quadrilateral do²⁴⁰ – even though they are easily discernible in the ecclesiological whole – but describes how “the Scriptures offers a portrait of a church living in the light of the Gospel”.²⁴¹ According to the PCS this portrait pictures the Church as follows:

- it is a Church rooted and grounded in the love and grace of the Lord Christ;
- it is a Church always joyful, praying continually and giving thanks even in the midst of suffering;
- it is a pilgrim Church, a people of God with a new heavenly citizenship, a holy nation and a royal priesthood;
- it is a Church which makes common confession of the apostolic faith in word and in life, the faith common to the whole Church everywhere and at all times;

²³⁶ PCS §18.

²³⁷ PCS §19. See also §32*i*, which uses the term “the corporate priesthood of the whole people of God” with reference to 1 Peter 2.5.

²³⁸ PCS §20.

²³⁹ PCS §20.

²⁴⁰ Sykes, ‘The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS’, p93.

²⁴¹ PCS §20.

- it is a Church with a mission to all in every race and nation, preaching the gospel, proclaiming the forgiveness of sins, baptizing and celebrating the eucharist;
- it is a Church which is served by an ordained apostolic ministry, sent by God to gather and nourish the people of God in each place, uniting and linking them with the Church universal within the whole communion of saints;
- it is a Church which manifests through its visible communion the healing and uniting power of God amidst the divisions of humankind;
- it is a Church in which the bonds of communion are strong enough to enable it to bear effective witness in the world, to guard and interpret the apostolic faith, to take decisions, to teach authoritatively, and to share its goods with those in need;
- it is a Church alive and responsive to the hope which God has set before it, to the wealth and glory of the share God has offered it in the heritage of his people, and to the vastness of the resources of God's power open to those who trust in him.

This portrait of the Church is by no means complete; nevertheless, it confronts our churches with challenges to the fidelity of our lives and with a constant need for repentance and renewal.

The portrait has played an important role in the debate and been emphasised, for example by Bishop Stephen Sykes,²⁴² as inventive and is important in my analysis of the PCS. The ecclesiology of the PCS, described by means of the scriptural portrait, means a spiritual reality that is not possessed by the church, but that makes the church fully dependent on a constant trust in the grace given in and by communion with the Triune God. This understanding is crucial for the Porvoo solution, which is based on the assumption that the Church does not possess apostolicity and succession, but is constantly called to receive and serve it. This means that the constant need for repentance and renewal, emphasised in the portrait, has consequences for the understanding of the church's unity and of how that unity might be achieved. Based on the ecclesiology described in *God's Kingdom and the Mystery and Purpose of the Church*, the PCS explores *The Nature of Communion and the Goal of Unity* (PCS §21-28).

2.5.6. Unity in the PCS

The divine and sacramental reality of the Church is determinative for unity in the PCS. "Because the unity of the Church is grounded in the mysterious relationship of the persons of the Trinity, this unity belongs by necessity to

²⁴² Sykes, 'The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS', p93ff.

its nature”.²⁴³ In this perspective unity is not a human creation, but is received as a gift from God and for the church to be drawn into. As such unity is not something outward and extra but an eschatological focus of the church and the Christian life. Unity is understood in the PCS as “the goal of all creation when the whole world will be reconciled to God” and thus the fruit of redemption,²⁴⁴ for which the Church is a sign, instrument and a foretaste.

In the Lutheran-Roman Catholic document *Ways to Community*, the unity of the church is defined as *unity in visibility, diversity and dynamism*.²⁴⁵ All of those are present in the PCS, albeit not systematised in the same way as in the Lutheran-Roman Catholic document. Those three are vital for understanding unity in the PCS, and are inter-related.

Visibility: The church in the PCS is seen as a visible and corporate communion, and the goal of the PCS is the visible unity of the churches concerned and ultimately of all churches. The word ‘visible’ is used seventeen times in the PCS – every time in relation to the Church and its communion and unity. The word ‘body’ is used twelve times as a description of the Church, or applied on the eucharist in relation to the Church. §22 combines the two terms and states that, due to the divided ecclesial situation, there is a need of “fuller visible embodiment in structured form, so that the Church may be seen to be, through the Holy Spirit, the one Body of Christ and the sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom”.

Dynamism: Since unity belongs to the nature of the church, disunity is understood as an anomalous situation for the church.²⁴⁶ Consequently the churches, according to the PCS, are obliged to “promote and nurture the highest possible realization of communion between and within the churches”.²⁴⁷ This understanding opens the way to a dynamic understanding of unity and of the life of the church. The statement notes that there is already a partial unity and communion among the churches, but:

Despite our sins and schisms, the unity to which we are summoned has already begun to be manifested in the Church. It demands fuller visible embodiment in structured form, so that the Church may be seen to be, through the Holy Spirit, the one Body of Christ and the sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom. In this perspective, all existing denominational traditions are provisional.²⁴⁸

Since the Church reveals the eschatological reality in an anticipatory way, the provisionality of the denominations, as stated in the PCS, does not only

²⁴³ PCS §21.

²⁴⁴ PCS §27.

²⁴⁵ LRCJC, ‘Ways to Community’, p221, §32ff. In its discussion of unity the PCS quotes *Ways to Community*, PCS §21, 23 and note 5 and 6 in the PCS.

²⁴⁶ PCS §22.

²⁴⁷ PCS §27.

²⁴⁸ PCS §22.

points towards a future celestial reality, but is also a statement of the obligation for the churches to be transformed into the unity of Christ already now, in their earthly existence. The dynamic understanding of unity means that the PCS is both a statement of what the churches agree on through their approval of the PD, and an agreement that obligates the Porvoo churches “to face and overcome the remaining obstacles to still closer communion”,²⁴⁹ and to develop the necessary means to do so. The PCS both establishes a communion and starts a process to make the communion real and increase its visibility. At its core this is an emphasis on the portrait of the church’s call to fidelity and to the “constant need for repentance and renewal”,²⁵⁰ before and in communion with the Triune God.

Diversity: PCS states that visible unity should not be confused with uniformity, “but is given with and in diversity”²⁵¹ by the Holy Spirit. “Both the unity and the diversity of the Church are ultimately grounded in the communion of God the Holy Trinity”.²⁵² While not every kind of diversity serves the unity, the church needs to be kept together and protected against divisive diversity which, according to the PCS, is achieved by *bonds of communion*.

The maintenance of unity and the sustaining of diversity are served by bonds of communion. Communion with God and with fellow believers is manifested in one baptism in response to the apostolic preaching; in the common confession of the apostolic faith; in the united celebration of the eucharist which builds up the one body of Christ; and in a single ministry set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands. This unity is also manifested as a communion in love, implying that Christians are bound to one another in a committed relationship with mutual responsibilities, common spiritual goods and the obligation to share temporal resources.²⁵³

While such a “communion in love” in organisational perspective may sound dull, the PCS states a few sections later that the church’s communion:

Has a variety of interrelated aspects. It entails agreement in faith, together with the common celebration of the sacraments, supported by a united ministry and forms of collegial and conciliar consultation in matters of faith, life and witness. These expressions of communion may need to be embodied in the law and regulations of the church.²⁵⁴

²⁴⁹ PCS §33. Cf. also §27f.

²⁵⁰ PCS §20.

²⁵¹ PCS §23, quoted from LRCJC, ‘Ways to Community’, p216, §9.

²⁵² PCS §23.

²⁵³ PCS §24.

²⁵⁴ PCS §28.

2.5.7. Ordained ministry in the PCS

As a consequence of its ecclesiological approach and its emphasis on the visibility of the church, the PCS understands the ordained ministry as part of the church's doctrine and not as something that is added later. Expressed in traditional Lutheran language, the ordained ministry is understood as an integral part of and prerequisite for the proclamation of the Gospel and the sacramental life of the church (CA 7). In the word of the PCS: "There is no proclamation of the word and sacraments without a community and its ministry".²⁵⁵ This describes the relationship both between the ordained ministry and the whole people of God, and that between the ordained ministry and the Gospel and the sacraments. On the former point, the PCS states that:

We believe that *all members of the church* are called to participate in its apostolic mission. All the baptized are therefore given various gifts and ministries by the Holy Spirit. They are called to offer their being as 'a living sacrifice' and to intercede for the Church and the salvation of the world. This is the corporate priesthood of the whole people of God and the calling to ministry and service (1 Peter 2.5).²⁵⁶

On the relationship between the ordained ministry and proclamation of the Gospel and the sacraments, the PCS says:

We believe that within the community of the Church the ordained ministry exists to serve the ministry of the whole people of God. We hold the ordained ministry of word and sacrament to be an office of divine institution and as such a gift of God to his Church. Ordained ministers are related, as are all Christians, both to the priesthood of Christ and to the priesthood of the Church. This basic oneness of the ordained ministry is expressed in the service of word and sacrament. In the life of the Church, this unity has taken a differentiated form. The threefold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon became the general pattern in the Church of the early centuries and is still retained by many churches, though often in partial form. 'The threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it'.²⁵⁷

While ordained ministry is understood to be of divine institution, in its description of the emergence of the threefold ministry the PCS, as in BEM, sees the early church as normative (*ab antiquo*) and, in contrast with mediaeval theology, does not make use of the *ius divinum* terminology. On this basis, pneumatologically motivated in BEM, and in the knowledge that all the Porvoo churches were already episcopally ordered, the PCS states that the episcopal ministry is necessary in the life of the church:

²⁵⁵ PCS §11.

²⁵⁶ PCS §32*i*. Cf. also PCS §19.

²⁵⁷ PCS §32*j*, quoting from BEM, M§22.

We believe that a ministry of pastoral oversight (episcopé), exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways, is necessary as witness to and safeguard of the unity and apostolicity of the Church. Further, we retain and employ the episcopal office as a sign of our intention, under God, to ensure the continuity of the Church in apostolic life and witness. For these reasons, all our churches have a personally exercised episcopal office.²⁵⁸

As in BEM, the use of the threefold ministry as an expression of unity and as a means to achieving it, poses a challenge to all the Porvoo churches. The PD also specifically states that the churches commit themselves “to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry”.²⁵⁹ The reason that the PD specifically mentions the diaconate and not the threefold ministry is that the churches, through the PCS, already have a joint understanding of episcopacy and priesthood, but not yet of the diaconate.²⁶⁰ This is an indication of the dynamic understanding of communion and unity in the PCS. Deacons are not interchangeable in the Porvoo Communion until the issue of the diaconate has been worked through by the churches.

2.5.8. Apostolic succession in the PCS

With the common understanding of ecclesiology, faith, and ordained ministry established in the first three chapters, the PCS turns in chapter IV to the reason for the agreement: to overcome the “longstanding problem about episcopal ministry and its relation to succession”.²⁶¹ This is addressed in five sections that come after an introduction, which briefly explains why the western Nordic churches had an occasional break in episcopal succession in the sixteenth century. This is followed by a treatment of: A. the apostolicity of the whole church; B. its inter-relation to apostolic ministry; C. succession in the episcopal office; D. episcopal succession as sign; and finally E. describes the consequences of the agreement, entitled *A new stage*. The first four sections of chapter IV – the introduction and sections A to C – and the major part of D describe church, ministry and ordination in a normative way; and then, finally, the last part of section D, in §52 and §53, presents a solution to the “longstanding problem”.

Chapter IV opens with a presentation of why the Porvoo churches have different episcopal orders, even though the intention has been the same:

²⁵⁸ PCS §32*k*, with reference to Niagara §69, and Meissen §15(ix). The description of *episcopé* “exercised in personal, communal and collegial ways” is also found in BEM M§26 with reference to Faith & Order in Lausanne 1927. See Chapter 2.3.2.

²⁵⁹ PCS/PD §58 *b(vii)*.

²⁶⁰ Pädam, ‘Towards a Common Understanding of Diaconal Ministry?’. In the ELCD professional social workers are titled ‘deacon’; they are not ordained, nor considered part of the ordained ministry.

²⁶¹ PCS §34.

At the time of the Reformation all our churches ordained bishops (sometimes the term superintendent was used as a synonym for bishop) to the existing sees of the Catholic Church, indicating their intention to continue the life and ministry of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. In some of the territories the historic succession of bishops was maintained by episcopal ordination, whereas elsewhere on a few occasions bishops or superintendents were consecrated by priests following what was believed to be the precedent of the early Church.²⁶² One consequence of this was a lack of unity between the ministries of our churches and thus a hindrance to our common witness, service and mission. The interruption of the episcopal succession has, nevertheless, in these particular churches always been accompanied by the intention and by measures to secure the apostolic continuity of the Church as a Church of the gospel served by an episcopal ministry. The subsequent tradition of these churches demonstrates their faithfulness to the apostolicity of the Church. In the last one hundred years all our churches have felt a growing need to overcome this difficulty and to give common expression to their continuous participation in the life of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Because of this difficulty we now set out at greater length an understanding of the apostolicity of the whole Church and within that the apostolic ministry, succession in the episcopal office and the historic succession as a sign. All of these are interrelated.²⁶³

The PCS notes that in some of the Porvoo churches there was a break in the episcopal succession, but that this was done in good faith, according to what was believed to be the model of the early church, and with the intention and means “to secure the apostolic continuity of the Church as a Church of the gospel served by an episcopal ministry”.²⁶⁴ What is expressed briefly in this paragraph is further elaborated in the historical essays to which the section refers. The essays state that the Danish church province had to break with the old episcopate in order to secure an episcopal pastoral leadership in practice, not only in name, and the continuity of the apostolic life. Due to the grave decay of the Danish episcopate the Danish church had lacked episcopal pastoral guidance before the formal break. In practice the Danish presbyterate had been the only active ministry in Denmark for several years before King Christian III chose to solve the situation in an extra-ordinary way,²⁶⁵ and which has been regarded as a break in episcopal succession. The breach is interpreted ecclesiologically in the PCS, rather than focusing on the

²⁶² The PCS refers here to one of the historical essays. See note 37 in the PCS: “For this see the Introduction, the historical essays on Episcopacy in our Churches and J. Halliburton, ‘Orders and Ordination’ in the *Essays on Church and Ministry in Northern Europe*.”

²⁶³ PCS §34f.

²⁶⁴ PCS §34.

²⁶⁵ The historical essays describe the complex history of the Reformation and emphasise both the political process and the tensions between the Danish episcopate in a state of grave decay, a distant Papacy with a lack of sensitivity to the problem, and an emerging national consciousness among kings and nobility. See in particular the essays of Gerhard Pedersen and John Halliburton in *Together in Mission and Ministry*. See also Chapter 14.2.3.

individual ordination, and states that “one consequence of this was a lack of unity between the ministries of our churches and thus a hindrance to our common witness, service and mission”.²⁶⁶

The PCS understands apostolic succession in the substantive sense as developed in the ecumenical movement during the second half of the 20th century, and refers constantly to BEM in its treatment of apostolicity and the apostolic ministry.²⁶⁷ Important for the understanding of apostolicity in the PCS is its close connection to the church as *koinonia* and to the mission of the church. Not only episcopacy, but also the teaching of the church, is understood integrally in the church as a *koinonia* of God, thus overcoming the traditional dichotomy created by identifying either *doctrine* or *the ordained ministry* as apostolic succession. Instead, the PCS states, quoting an entire passage from BEM, that:

‘In the Creed, the Church confesses itself to be apostolic. The Church lives in continuity with the apostles and their proclamation. The same Lord who sent the apostles continues to be present in the Church. The Spirit keeps the Church in the apostolic tradition until the fulfilment of history in the Kingdom of God. Apostolic Tradition in the Church means continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles: witness to the apostolic faith, proclamation and fresh interpretation of the Gospel, celebration of baptism and the eucharist, the transmission of ministerial responsibilities, communion in prayer, love, joy and suffering, service to the sick and needy, unity among the local churches and sharing the gifts which the Lord has given to each.’²⁶⁸

Because of the Lord’s living presence, “the Church is called to faithfulness to the normative apostolic witness to the life, death, resurrection and exaltation of its Lord. The Church receives its mission and the power to fulfil this mission as a gift of the risen Christ. The Church is thus apostolic as a whole.”²⁶⁹

Through its elaboration of apostolicity and succession the PCS avoids two different interpretations: it does not identify apostolicity solely with episcopal succession, but understands it as integral to the church’s apostolicity and as an expression of that apostolicity; and it does not understand apostolicity as an abstraction of faith lacking any concrete relationship with the actual visible life of the church.²⁷⁰ The implicit understanding of the PCS is that both the Lutheran and the Anglican churches have narrowed their understanding of the concret expression of apostolicity. For Lutherans, albeit in different ways, this expression has been about doctrine (*successio doctrinae*), while for Anglicans it has been about episcopal succession (*successio manu-*

²⁶⁶ PCS §34.

²⁶⁷ See the notes to PCS §§36-40.

²⁶⁸ PCS §36, which as a whole is a quotation from BEM, M§34.

²⁶⁹ PCS §37.

²⁷⁰ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p166f.

um). Historically, the ordained ministry has been important for Lutherans, as doctrine has been for Anglicans; but the emphasis in practice have been on *doctrine* and *episcopal succession* respectively.

Through *substantive apostolicity*, the PCS takes a broader view that includes both doctrine and episcopal succession, but is more than simply a combination of the traditional Lutheran and Anglican interpretations. The broader or – in the words of the two chairmen – *deeper understanding* means an integrated understanding of ecclesiology, apostolicity, tradition and history, demonstrated in the quotation from BEM in section 36 of the PCS. *Substantive apostolicity* is thus the content of the *deeper understanding*, that I described in Chapter 1.

Crucial to how the PCS understands apostolicity, and to its basis for the Porvoo solution, is its terminological use. In its description of the church's apostolicity, the PCS varies between *continuity*, *historic*, *tradition* and *succession*. *Continuity* is used 36 times (including one *continuation* and four *continue*), *tradition* 17 times, *permanence* once, and *succession* 26 times. Other related concepts are the use of *historic* in combination with other concepts such as *historic succession*, *historic episcopal succession*, *historic episcopate*, and *historic sees*. *Continuity*, *historic*, *tradition* and *succession* are used in an interrelated, but not always interchangeable, way. A further concept of importance is *intention*, which is used seven times. 'Intention' is used in the PCS to demonstrate that, although the course of history resulted in a break in episcopal succession, the intention was to preserve and safeguard the continuity of the apostolic church and of episcopal order.

The alternative concepts for apostolicity and succession are used in order to broaden the understanding. On the one hand, it avoids the immediate identification of apostolicity with *episcopal* or *doctrinal* succession, since *continuation*, *historic*, *tradition* – and, in combination with those, *succession* – relate to the whole Church and not only to one or a few aspects of the Church. On the other hand, these concepts help to make apostolicity real beyond a merely idealistic understanding. In the words of BEM, quoted in the PCS, "apostolic tradition in the Church means continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles",²⁷¹ made explicit through a description of the ongoing spiritual and sacramental life of the church. That life, which apostolicity is about, is the same life that was given to the apostles, and "means that the Church is sent by Jesus to be for the world, to participate in his mission and therefore in the mission of the One who sent Jesus, to participate in the mission of the Father and the Son through the dynamic of the Holy Spirit".²⁷²

According to the PCS, apostolicity signifies two interrelated things: first, the ongoing life given in continuity with the apostles and in the Triune God;

²⁷¹ PCS §36.

²⁷² PCS §37, with a quotation from Niagara §21.

and second, flowing from this salvific, sacramental and eschatological communion and life, the mission to be sent, *apostéllō*, to the world. This life and mission is given to the whole church by the Holy Spirit:

God the Holy Spirit pours out his gifts upon the whole Church (Eph. 4.11-13, 1 Cor. 12.4-11), and raises up men and women, both lay and ordained, to contribute to the nurture of the community. Thus the whole Church, and every member, participates in and contributes to the communication of the gospel, by their faithful expression and embodiment of the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles in a given time and place.²⁷³

Fundamental to the Porvoo solution is the notion that it is the church as a whole that is apostolic; and this means the continued presence of Christ in the visible life and faith of the church. The ongoing life and mission of the church in love, discipline, organisation and sacramental life indicates that “the primary manifestation of apostolic succession is to be found in the apostolic tradition of the Church as a whole. The succession is an expression of the permanence and, therefore, of the continuity of Christ’s own mission in which the Church participates,”²⁷⁴ and points both back to the sending of Christ and forward to the coming of Christ and the fulfilment of all.²⁷⁵ Thus the PCS anchors these concepts in the previous description of church as a sacramental and visible *koinonia* of and with God.

With the apostolicity, succession, and continuity of the whole church established, the argument in the PCS turns to the ordained ministry:

Within the apostolicity of the whole Church is an apostolic succession of the ministry which serves and is a focus of the continuity of the Church in its life in Christ and its faithfulness to the words and acts by the apostles.²⁷⁶ The ordained ministry has a particular responsibility for witnessing to this tradition and for proclaiming it afresh with authority in every new generation.²⁷⁷

The PCS understands ordained ministry as an apostolic ministry, instituted by God and transmitted through the apostles and developed into the threefold form. It is given to the church by God to nourish, assemble, and build up, and it is set apart for a lifelong ministry through the laying on of hands and invocation of the Holy Spirit. According to the PCS, and due to the diversity of God’s gifts and the threat of division, episcopacy is given for the sake of the church’s unity through time and space. A ministry of oversight, *episcopé*, is therefore required and is of fundamental importance for the whole church.²⁷⁸

²⁷³ PCS §38.

²⁷⁴ PCS §39, with reference to BEM M§35.

²⁷⁵ PCS §36.

²⁷⁶ Original note: “Cf. BEM, Ministry, para. 34: Commentary”.

²⁷⁷ PCS §40, with reference to BEM M§34 commentary, and BEM M§35.

²⁷⁸ PCS §41.

Oversight of the Church and its mission is the particular responsibility of the bishop. The bishop's office is one of service and communication within the community of believers and, together with the whole community, to the world. Bishops preach the word, preside at the sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. They have pastoral oversight of the area to which they are called. They serve the apostolicity, catholicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship and sacramental life.²⁷⁹ They have responsibility for leadership in the Church's mission. None of these tasks should be carried out in isolation from the whole church.²⁸⁰

Importantly for the understanding of ecclesiology and unity, the PCS states that "the ministry of oversight is exercised personally, collegially and communally" at the local, regional and universal levels of the Church's life.²⁸¹ The sentence is a quote from BEM, but with one important difference. While BEM uses the imperative – "the ministry of oversight *should* be exercised..." – the PCS uses the stronger indicative "*is* exercised", which means that "the oversight of the Church and its mission" is already the bishop's responsibility in the Porvoo churches. The PCS does not further elaborate on the levels of the church's life as "local, regional and universal", but in practice it means that the text of the PCS is open to a universal collegiality and to the Petrine ministry, even though this is not explicitly stated.

In part C., the PCS describes how episcopacy is related to the church's apostolicity, under the title *The Episcopal Office in the Service of the Apostolic Succession*. The ecclesiological approach to the longstanding problem about episcopal succession is elaborated in three concise sentences in §46. The argumentation is subtle, and needs to be discerned, in the words of the two chairmen, with "close attention".²⁸² The logic in the PCS moves from the whole to the particular. First, it comments on the fidelity of the church and the Lord's presence: "The ultimate ground of the fidelity of the Church, in continuity with the apostles, is the promise of the Lord and the presence of the Holy Spirit at work in the whole Church". Second, the argumentation moves from the whole church to the ministry of oversight, i.e. the episcopal ministry that all the Porvoo churches have, and states that "the continuity of the ministry of oversight is to be understood within the continuity of the apostolic life and mission of the whole church". Third, the apostolicity of the whole church is linked to the episcopal succession that not all the Porvoo churches retained: "Apostolic succession in the episcopal office is a visible and personal way of focusing the apostolicity of the whole Church".

Before dealing with how to overcome the tension between episcopal succession that was maintained unbroken or temporarily interrupted, the PCS

²⁷⁹ With reference to BEM, M§26.

²⁸⁰ PCS §43.

²⁸¹ PCS §44-45.

²⁸² PCS Foreword §9.

describes the meaning of episcopal succession. The argument alternates between *continuity* and *succession* – a succession that is alternatively about the episcopacy or about the whole apostolic tradition. Without making an exclusive identification of ordination in episcopal succession with the apostolic tradition of the whole church, the PCS states that “continuity in apostolic succession is signified in the ordination or consecration of a bishop”. Ordination is described as a communal act consisting of the laying on of hands by the ordaining bishop, in the midst of the church, with the invocation of the Holy Spirit.²⁸³ The sign of the ordination of a bishop is said in §48 to be effective in four ways:

1. It is a witness to the trust of the Church in the Triune God’s faithfulness to his people and presence to the end of time.
2. It expresses the intention of the Church to be faithful to God’s initiative and gift, by living in the continuity of the apostolic faith and tradition.
3. “The participating of a group of bishops in the laying on of hands signifies their and their churches’ acceptance of the new bishop and so of the catholicity of the churches.”²⁸⁴
4. “It transmits ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God’s will and institution. Thus in the act of consecration a bishop receives the sign of divine approval and a permanent commission to lead his particular church in the common faith and apostolic life of all the churches.”

As an effective sign, ordination is understood sacramentally as transmitting the episcopal ministry.²⁸⁵ In accordance with this sacramental understanding, an interruption in the line of ordination would create a problem, since it is the episcopally-conducted ordination in succession that effects and thereby transmits the episcopal ministry to the ordained. At the same time it is emphasised (again linked to the ecclesiological approach) that:

The continuity signified in the consecration of a bishop to episcopal ministry cannot be divorced from the continuity of life and witness of the diocese to which he is called. In particular circumstances of our churches, the continuity represented by the occupation of the historic sees is more than personal. The care to maintain a diocesan and parochial pattern of pastoral life and ministry reflects an intention of the churches to continue to exercise the apostolic ministry of word and sacrament of the universal church.²⁸⁶

The ecclesiology set out in the PCS is instrumental: the church is understood as an instrument of the Triune God’s will to save, not only the church, but

²⁸³ PCS §47.

²⁸⁴ With reference to “Cf. Niagara, para. 91”.

²⁸⁵ I will discuss the question of sacrament and sacramentality in Chapter 11.

²⁸⁶ PCS §49.

the entire creation. To say that the church is an instrument of God's saving will is to say that the church is understood as "a sign of the Kingdom of God".²⁸⁷ As part of this sacramental ecclesiological reality, episcopal ordination in succession is regarded as a sacramental sign that expresses the church's "care for continuity in the whole of its life and mission, and reinforces its determination to manifest the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles".²⁸⁸

However, as noted already, the PCS avoids an exclusive identification of apostolicity with episcopal succession, and states that:

The use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission. There have been schisms in the history of churches using the sign of historic succession. Nor does the sign guarantee the personal faithfulness of the bishop. Nonetheless, the retention of the sign remains a permanent challenge to fidelity and to unity, a summons to witness to, and a commission to realise more fully, the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles.²⁸⁹

This paragraph echoes the formulation in BEM that describes episcopal succession as "a sign, though not a guarantee".²⁹⁰ With that established, the PCS has described the joint understanding of ecclesiology, doctrine, ordained ministry, episcopacy, episcopal succession as sign, and turns to how the Porvoo churches' divergent traditions of episcopal succession could be reconciled. The Porvoo solution to the problem is presented in §52 to §54:

§52 Faithfulness to the apostolic calling of the whole Church is carried by more than one means of continuity. Therefore a church which has preserved the sign of historic episcopal succession is free to acknowledge an authentic episcopal ministry in a church which has preserved continuity in episcopal office by an occasional priestly/presbyteral ordination at the time of the Reformation. Similarly, a church which has preserved continuity through such a succession is free to enter a relationship of mutual participation in episcopal ordinations with a church which has retained the historical episcopal succession, and to embrace this sign, without denying its past apostolic continuity.

§53 The mutual acknowledgement of our churches and ministries is theologically prior to the use of the sign of the laying on of hands in the historic succession. Resumption of the use of the sign does not imply an adverse judgement on the ministries of those churches which did not previously make use of the sign. It is rather a means of making more visible the unity and continuity of the Church at all times and in all places.

§54 To the degree to which our ministries have been separated all our churches have lacked something of that fullness which God desires for his

²⁸⁷ PCS §50.

²⁸⁸ PCS §50.

²⁸⁹ PCS §51.

²⁹⁰ BEM, M§38; see further Chapter 12.

people (Eph. 1.23 and 3.17-19). By moving together, and by being served by a reconciled and mutually recognized episcopal ministry, our churches will be both more faithful to their calling and also more conscious of their need for renewal. By the sharing of our life and ministries in closer visible unity, we shall be strengthened for the continuation of Christ's mission in the world.

In the light of the Porvoo solution presented in those three paragraphs, it is important to keep a few issues in mind. The Porvoo solution make use of alternative terminology. §52 alternates between *episcopal succession* and *continuity in episcopal office*, where the latter includes the episcopal ministry of all the Porvoo churches.

The Porvoo understanding of episcopal succession should not be understood in isolation, but as an integral part of both the local church and the universal church. Locally, the PCS emphasises that the “continuity represented by the occupation of the historical sees is more than personal”,²⁹¹ but this is an expression of the continuity of the local church, i.e. the diocese. Universally, the break in episcopal ordination in the 16th century primarily meant that the church became divided and the resumption of the sign means the re-unification of divided churches. This is expressed in §54, which states that “to the degree to which our ministries have been separated all our churches have lacked something of that fullness which God desires for his people”. Through this all the Porvoo churches confess deficiencies that are visible through the division of the church and the need for unification. The assumption of this ecclesiological approach, embracing both *episcopal succession* and *continuity in episcopal ministry*, is overarched in the PCS by the ecclesiological approach that was described earlier in the document in these terms: “The ultimate ground of the fidelity of the Church, in continuity with the apostles, is the promise of the Lord and the presence of the Holy Spirit at work in the whole Church”.²⁹² It is the promise of the Lord and the activity of the Holy Spirit that give the churches the freedom to recognise each other as an expression of a mutual confession of their deficiencies and of their will to be transformed into unity in the Porvoo Communion.²⁹³

As noted about the terminology, the PCS does not focus on questions about validity; rather, it aims to establish a normative ecclesiological understanding, including episcopacy, and thereby a basis for mutual conversion, sharing of apostolic gifts, and overcoming the longstanding problem of episcopacy and succession. Based on the sacramental *koinonia* ecclesiology and the normative understanding of church, faith, sacraments, and ministry held in common, the churches can receive each other as gifts, and reach a visible unity served by one united episcopal ministry. In this solution episcopal

²⁹¹ PCS §49.

²⁹² PCS §46.

²⁹³ About this freedom, c.f. LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p272f, §79f.

succession is normative, and is seen as “a means of making more visible the unity and continuity of the Church at all times and in all places”.²⁹⁴

From this retaining and use of episcopal succession, it follows that mutual episcopal participation in the respective churches’ episcopal ordinations is not merely a symbol of the unity, but an effective sign that accomplishes the unity sought for.²⁹⁵ As a consequence of the mutual participation in the sacramental life of the church, in baptism, eucharist and ordination, the need also follows for common structures for decision-making in the church and juridical regulations formulated in the churches’ canon law.²⁹⁶ In §56-57 the PCS declares that:²⁹⁷

On the basis of this agreement we believe:

- That our churches should confidently acknowledge one another as churches and enter into a new relationship.
- That each church as a whole has maintained an authentic apostolic succession of witness and service (IV A).
- That each church has transmitted to it an apostolic ministry of word and sacrament by prayer and the laying on of hands (IV B).
- That each church has maintained an orderly succession of episcopal ministry within the continuity of its pastoral life, focused in the consecrations of bishops and in the experience and witness of the historic sees (IV C).
- In the light of all this we find that the time has come when all our churches can affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession (IV D). This means that those churches in which the sign has at some time not been used are free to recognize the value of the sign and should embrace it without denying their own apostolic continuity.

2.5.9. The Porvoo Declaration

Based on the mutual consensus in the PCS, the churches establish a communion with the purpose of being transformed into a greater and deeper visible unity. The meaning of the approval of the PD is two-fold: first, it establishes a visible communion of churches that previously experienced a reduced degree of communion that did not include visible sacramental communion. Second, it starts a process of merging the member churches into an even more visible and corporate unity and communion. The merging process is described in the PCS as whilst the unity in faith and life achieved through the PCS “does not require each tradition to accept every doctrinal formulation characteristic of our distinct traditions, it does require us to face and

²⁹⁴ PCS §53.

²⁹⁵ PCS §48.

²⁹⁶ PCS §28, 54, 58.

²⁹⁷ PCS §56f.

overcome the remaining obstacles to still closer communion”.²⁹⁸ The two-fold meaning of the PD is indicated by its structure. The PD has three parts: An introduction pointing back to the whole PCS as the normative basis for the PD; a part in which the churches acknowledge and recognise one other as part of the church of Christ; and a part in which the churches commit themselves to the Porvoo Communion. In the PD the Porvoo churches declare in common that:

On the basis of our common understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church, fundamental agreement in faith and our agreement on episcopacy in the service of the apostolicity of the Church, contained in Chapters II-IV of The Porvoo Common Statement, [we] make the following acknowledgements and commitments:

- (i) we acknowledge one another’s churches as churches belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the apostolic mission of the whole people of God;
- (ii) we acknowledge that in all our churches the Word of God is authentically preached, and the sacraments of baptism and the eucharist are duly administered;
- (iii) we acknowledge that all our churches share in the common confession of the apostolic faith;
- (iv) we acknowledge that one another’s ordained ministries are given by God as instruments of his grace and as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ’s commission through his Body, the Church;
- (v) we acknowledge that personal, collegial and communal oversight (episcopé) is embodied and exercised in all our churches in a variety of forms, in continuity of apostolic life, mission and ministry;
- (vi) we acknowledge that the episcopal office is valued and maintained in all our churches as a visible sign expressing and serving the Church’s unity and continuity in apostolic life, mission and ministry.

b We commit ourselves:

- (i) to share a common life in mission and service, to pray for and with one another, and to share resources;
- (ii) to welcome one another’s members to receive sacramental and other pastoral ministrations;
- (iii) to regard baptized members of all our churches as members of our own;
- (iv) to welcome diaspora congregations into the life of the indigenous churches, to their mutual enrichment;
- (v) to welcome persons episcopally ordained in any of our churches to the office of bishop, priest or deacon to serve, by invitation and in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force, in that ministry in the receiving church without re-ordination;

²⁹⁸ PCS §33.

- (vi) to invite one another's bishops normally to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church;
- (vii) to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry;
- (viii) to establish appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and order, life and work;
- (ix) to encourage consultations of representatives of our churches, and to facilitate learning and exchange of ideas and information in theological and pastoral matters;
- (x) to establish a contact group to nurture our growth in communion and to co-ordinate the implementation of this agreement.²⁹⁹

Following the Declaration (§58) Chapter V of the PCS recommends further that the agreement be inaugurated and celebrated by three central celebrations (§59), and that the visible unity achieved in the Porvoo Communion be seen as “a step towards the visible unity which all the churches committed to the ecumenical movement seek to manifest”.³⁰⁰

With this presentation of the PCS in the context of the ecumenical movement and its historical background, the question arises: How was the PCS received by the Porvoo churches and the international community of theologians? That is the focus of Part II of this thesis.

²⁹⁹ PCS/PD §58.

³⁰⁰ PCS §60.

Part II: The Porvoo debate and its interpretations of the PCS

3. The Porvoo debate in the Church of Sweden

In its preparation for the decision, and in its recommendation to the Church of Sweden (CoS) General Synod, the CoS Central Board noted that:¹

All institutions that submitted comments greet the Porvoo Declaration with appreciation and all, without exception, recommend that the General Synod make a decision on behalf of the Church of Sweden to subscribe to the declaration in §58 of the agreement.²

In the debate at the General Synod in 1994, the consensus was noteworthy. Only one negative motion was tabled: it asked the General Synod to reject the suggestion of the Central Board to subscribe to the PD.³ In the debate, however, the drafter of the motion chose not to argue for the rejection of the PD, but only emphasised his hesitations.⁴ In the end, the decision of the General Synod was unanimous.⁵ In the CoS's Porvoo debate there was widespread consensus to approve the declaration and to "greet it with joy" – an expression used in many of the answers referred to the Central Board. The straightforward process of decision-making demonstrates that the PCS was not seen as controversial or as contradicting the identity of the CoS. However, it does not tell us how the PCS was understood in the CoS. The aim of this chapter is to present the process in the CoS and to investigate how the PCS was understood. I will start with a presentation of the constitutional situation of the CoS, because, as noted in Chapter 1, it expresses how a par-

¹ After 2000 the Central Board was called the Church Board. It consists of the Archbishop of Uppsala as chairman and members elected by the General Synod. Apart from the Archbishop there is no express representation of the ordained ministry. The Central Board was (and the Church Board is) obliged to consult the Bishops' Conference before making decisions.

² CoS, the Central Board, 'Svenska kyrkans centralstyrelses skrivelse till kyrkomötet 1994:5', p8. "Samtliga remissinstanser hälsar Borgå-deklarationen med tillfredsställelse och alla, utan undantag, rekommenderar kyrkomötet att fatta beslut om att för Svenska kyrkans del anta deklarationen i överenskommelsens 58 §."

³ Heikkinen, 'Kmot 1994:74'; Cf. Edqvist, 'Letter to Johan Dalman and Ragnar Persenius', p1f. Edqvist noted that Heikkinen, as the only exception to the common Swedish approval of the PCS, argued in the same way that many did in the debate in the ELCD. Edqvist further noted that the Swedish Evangelical Mission did not argue in line with its theological heritage from the 19th century revival movement.

⁴ Heikkinen, 'Kyrkomötesdiskussion, nr 7, 1994-08-24, talare Pekka Heikkinen', p89.

⁵ CoS, Persenius, 'Svenska kyrkans kyrkomöte antar Borgå-deklarationen', p1; Cf. Tjørhom, 'The Porvoo Common Statement - An Introduction and Evaluation', p18 who noted the more or less absence of critical voices and discussion about the PCS in the CoS.

ticular church understands order and organisation and whether and how this relates to apostolic succession; followed by a presentation of how the Porvoo debate was conducted, and end with a presentation of the arguments used for and against the PCS.

3.1. The Constitution of the Church of Sweden

The immediate consequence of the Reformation in the Nordic countries and in England was that kings replaced the pope and assumed the right to appoint bishops. As a result, the Swedish church province, *ecclesia svecana*,⁶ became independent from the Bishop of Rome. This was a nationalistic emphasis, but in practice, even before the Reformation, kings had often appointed bishops in the church. The difference was that now they did not have to wait for the Pope's approval and confirmation – something that had been economically costly for the monarchs. The commerce with Rome about the appointment of bishops was one factor leading to the Reformation in both Sweden and Denmark. Another crucial factor was that confidence in the Roman hierarchy was deeply undermined by political and economic factors. In Sweden, as in Denmark and England, the main driving force for the Reformation was the king and his ambition to amass political and economic power. After the Reformation, the CoS maintained a kind of semi-autonomy in relation to the state.⁷

After the split from Rome, the Swedish church province searched for new structures of consultation. The Swedish king summoned a council in Uppsala in 1572. It was opened by Archbishop Laurentius Petri with an extended lecture about the role of councils in church history. He emphasised the importance of councils for determining doctrine and developing a common tradition.⁸ In the decision of the Provincial Council of Uppsala in 1593, consisting of bishops and priests, it was stated, against the will of the Calvinist-influenced King Karl IX, that the CoS is a *via media* church, standing between the protestant and papist positions.⁹ The semi-autonomy of the CoS was due to the episcopal ordering of the church and the preservation of the pre-Reformation episcopate.¹⁰ Initially King Gustav Vasa (1521-1560) needed valid bishops – i.e., those approved by the pope and properly ordained – in order to be validly crowned as king. In order to meet the expectations of the people he also needed priests who were properly ordained. It was thus

⁶ The formal term for the Swedish church province in the medieval time was *Provincia Uppsaliensis*, but *ecclesia svecana* was also used as by Ericus Olai, professor in theology at the University of Uppsala (1477-1486). Ericus Olai, *Chronica regni Gothorum*.

⁷ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p 59ff, 76ff, 109.

⁸ Cnattingius, *Uppsala möte 1593*, p76ff.

⁹ CoS, the Provincial Council of Uppsala 1593, 'Uppsala mötes beslut 1593', p709.

¹⁰ E.g. LRCDSF, *Justification in the Life of the Church*, p100f, §297.

important for him to keep the church as traditional as possible. Later on, when his position as king had been secured, he actively tried to reduce the autonomy of the church in order to minimise its influence on the nation. He accomplished this by establishing a new order in the church: he appointed superintendents, who were not ordained bishops, and partly operated alongside the bishops. However, he never managed to fulfil his plans, although he came close to altering the episcopal order. When King Gustav Vasa died in 1560, Archbishop Laurentius Petri was still alive. The crown was inherited by Gustav Vasa's son Erik XIV, and only eight years later by the second son, Johan III. Johan was married to Katarina Jagellonica, sister of the Polish king and a Roman Catholic, and hoped to reunite the CoS with Rome. With the new king, Archbishop Petri was finally able to approve the publishing of a new Church Order (CO 1571) for the Swedish church in 1571.¹¹ CO 1571 was conservative, and stated that "all good traditions" should be preserved if they did not contradict Scripture. Episcopacy is understood as a gift from the Holy Spirit, and "has to be liked and approved ... as long as the world stands".¹² CO 1571 was confirmed at the provincial council of Uppsala in 1593, and remains part of the confession of the CoS. With its *via media* approach and its appreciation of episcopacy as a gift of the Holy Spirit, it has been important in ecumenical relations with the Anglican and RC churches, as well as in relationships with Evangelic churches.¹³

The first *allmänna kyrkomötet* (general church synod) was instituted in 1863. In contrast with the provincial councils of the mediaeval and Reformation times the 1863 synod was a new creation, consisting as it did of the bishops and elected representatives of the priests and lay people.¹⁴ At the beginning of the 20th century most European states abandoned the state church system. In the Nordic countries, however, the system was emphasised even more strongly. In Sweden, as in Denmark, the Social Democratic Party was an important factor in this development.¹⁵ The new constitution of the CoS's General Synod in 1982 changed the balanced composition of representatives for the CoS, and neither bishops nor priests have a place in the synod in their own right. The General Synod of 1982, and even more in the General Synod of 2000, consists solely of elected members representing any of the different so-called *nomination groups* (i.e., political parties in the church), some of which are identical to the secular political parties.

The CoS Doctrinal Commission evaluates issues of doctrinal importance, and has a kind of limited veto in relation to the General Synod.¹⁶ The Doctrinal Commission consists of the Bishops' Conference and eight theologians

¹¹ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, 65ff.

¹² Petri, 'CO 1571', p162.

¹³ E.g. LRCDSF, *Justification in the Life of the Church*.

¹⁴ Eckerdal, Persson, and Gerhardsson, *Vad står Svenska kyrkan för?*, p115.

¹⁵ E.g. Alvunger, *Nytt vin i gamla läglar*.

¹⁶ CO 2000, chapter 11, §16.

elected by the General Synod. The Bishops' Conference, consisting of the fourteen bishops, meets regularly for consultations and to prepare doctrinal or pastoral letters.¹⁷ Issues for the CoS nationally are handled by the Church Board (i.e. the Central board before 2000), consisting of the Archbishop of Uppsala as chairman and members elected by General Synod. Apart from the Archbishop, there is no stated representation of the ordained ministry. Before decisions on issues of theological and ecumenical importance, the Board is obliged to consult the Bishops' Conference.¹⁸

In 2000 the CoS was partly dis-established and, as it was put officially, there were "changed relations between church and state" in Sweden.¹⁹ There is still a state law about the CoS that regulates her identity; and, due to the involvement of the secular political parties in the decision-making processes of the church, the CoS is still significantly influenced by the secular political system.²⁰ This system is regularly discussed and criticised by members of the church as ecclesologically problematic and economically expensive; but so far the system has been defended by the political parties, which obviously gain from it.²¹

3.2. The Porvoo decision in the Church of Sweden

With its episcopal structure and synodical system, the CoS's competence to make decisions about the PCS belonged to the General Synod. The decision was prepared by the Central Board, which submitted a Swedish translation of the PCS for comment to the chapters of all thirteen dioceses of the CoS. The submission process also included several formal bodies of, and organisations in, the CoS, such as the CoS General Synod Theological Commission, CoS Mission, CoS Aid, and others. Besides those, the Diocesan Board of each diocese was asked to submit its opinion of the PD and the PCS.²² The institutions were asked to say "yes or no, with reasons" to the "Porvoo Declaration as a whole according to paragraph 58", and to comment on the PCS.²³ As preparation for the Porvoo debate, the CoS was the only church that translated not only the PCS but also the essays on church and ministry,

¹⁷ CO 2000, chapter 13.

¹⁸ CO 2000, chapter 12.

¹⁹ Edqvist, *Från kyrkolag till kyrkoordning*, p27f.

²⁰ E.g. Ekström, *Makten över kyrkan*.

²¹ See e.g. LRCDS, *The Office of Bishop*, p90; Stenström, 'Bort med partipolitiken i kyrkan'.

²² Several of the diocesan boards chose not to answer, since the Chapters of their dioceses already had done so, or just to confirm the decision of the chapter. These were the diocesan boards in the dioceses of Linköping, Skara, Strängnäs, Västerås, Växjö, Göteborg, Härnösand.

²³ CoS, the Central Board, 'Submission on Comment about the PCS', p1; See also CoS, the Central Board, 'Svenska kyrkans centralstyrelsens skrivelse till kyrkomötet 1994:5', p3f, 8. "Remissanvisning: Remissinstanserna tillfrågas om 1/ ställningstagande till Borgå-deklarationen som helhet enligt paragraf 58, sid 35-36 (ja eller nej med motivering) 2/ kommentarer och synpunkter på Borgå-överenskommelsen i övrigt".

which were published together with the PCS in the formally-approved version in English.²⁴ The CoS also commissioned the Swedish church historian Prof. Lars Österlin to write a history of the Swedish church with respect to Nordic-Anglican relations.²⁵ The year after, a translation prepared for an English audience was published.²⁶ Both of those actions were done to promote and facilitate the understanding and reception of the PCS in the churches concerned.

Considering the efforts in the CoS, with a new church history and a translation of both document and essays into Swedish, it is surprising that the PCS alone – not the volume including the essays about church and ministry – was sent for referral.²⁷ Reasons for this might be that the PCS was not seen as controversial in the CoS, and that many of those responsible for the decision, both ordained and lay, were acquainted with the Porvoo churches.²⁸ In a lecture in 1994, the CoS Porvoo delegate Bishop Tord Harlin noted that, even though it was not the case, many believe “that the CoS has already had ‘full communion’ since the 1920s, i.e. church and eucharistic communion with the English church, and that there is thus not much more to discuss and decide about on our part”.²⁹ The decision in the CoS General Synod was followed by a period of holding seminars in the dioceses about the basis and consequences for the churches of signing the PCS.

Before we investigate the content of the basis for decisions about the PD that the Central Board sent to the General Synod, we turn to the responses to the comment process in the CoS.

3.2.1. Responses from the referral for comment

All the institutions to which the documents were referred received the PCS with appreciation, and recommended that the Central Board approve the PD.³⁰ The responses differ from each other in length and theological content.

²⁴ Borgegård, *Kyrkogemenskap i norra Europa*.

²⁵ Österlin, *Svenska kyrkan i profil*.

²⁶ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*.

²⁷ CoS, the Central Board, ‘Submission on Comment about the PCS’, p1.

²⁸ Dalman, ‘Porvoo Again!’

²⁹ Harlin, ‘Anglikaner och lutheraner i förpliktande ekumenik’, p9. ”Många tror ... att Svenska kyrkan alltsedan 1920-talet redan har ”full communion”, dvs kyrko- och nattvards-gemenskap med den engelska kyrkan och att det därför inte finns mycket mer att diskutera och besluta om för vår del.”

³⁰ See the responses of the Diocesan Chapters and Boards of the CoS’s thirteen dioceses: Uppsala, Linköping, Skara, Strängnäs, Västerås, Växjö, Lund, Göteborg, Karlstad, Härnösand, Luleå, Visby, Stockholm; and; CoS, Pastoral Ministry Commission, ‘Response of the CoS Pastoral Ministry Commission’; CoS, the CoS Mission, ‘Response of the CoS Mission’; CoS, Church of Sweden Abroad, ‘Response of the CoS Abroad’; CoS, the Theological Committee, ‘Response of the CoS Theological Committee’; The Free Synod in the CoS, ‘Response of the Free Synod in the CoS’; CoS, the Swedish Evangelical Mission, ‘Response of the Swedish Evangelical Mission’; CoS Aid, ‘Response of the Church of Sweden Aid’;

Some of the answers were very brief. The chapter of the diocese of Lund said only that it “recommends with joy that the CoS adopt the agreement”,³¹ without any further reasons for their decision, somewhat against the instructions from the Central Board. In the responses there are some divergent understandings of the PCS and evaluations of episcopal succession; and behind those also lie different understandings of ecclesiology and of the unity of the church. It was frequently stated that “the PCS represents a major step forward for the ecumenical movement”,³² and that the PCS “witnesses to a high degree of unity in faith and doctrine,”³³ and is grounded on “a solid theological basis”.³⁴ Exceptionally, there were critiques of the PCS that said that it emphasised episcopal succession too much,³⁵ and that the sacramental ecclesiology of the PCS was too one-sided.³⁶ I will present the reactions to the PCS under these headings: *The Porvoo solution*; *The understanding of unity*; and *Possible consequences of the PCS*.

A. The Porvoo solution: Not all of the responses commented on the Porvoo solution; some noted only that the agreement was well-grounded or that they greeted it with joy. Many of the responses recognised that the PCS was the fruit and further development of earlier ecumenical agreements, especially of the Faith & Order studies on apostolicity.³⁷ In the responses it is

CoS, the Ecumenical Commission of the General Synod, ‘Statement by the Ecumenical Commission of the CoS General Synod’.

³¹ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Lund, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Lund’. ‘Lunds domkapitel tillstyrker med glädje att Svenska kyrkan antar överenskommelsen’. Short responses were also delivered from CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Skara, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Skara’; and CoS Abroad (SKUT), ‘Response of the CoS Abroad (SKUT)’.

³² CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Strängnäs, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Strängnäs’, p1. ‘Borgå-överenskommelsen markerar ett betydande framsteg i det ekumeniska arbetet.’; See also CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Växjö, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Växjö’, p2; CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Göteborg, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Göteborg’, p1; CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Härnösand, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Härnösand’, p2; CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Luleå, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Luleå’, p1.

³³ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Uppsala, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Uppsala’, p1. ‘Sammanfattningen av samtalen vittnar om en hög grad av enhet i tro och lära.’; CoS, the Diocese Board of Uppsala, ‘Response of the Diocese Board of Uppsala’, p1; CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Västerås, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Västerås’, p1.

³⁴ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Stockholm, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Stockholm’, p1. ‘resultatet av samtal på solid teologisk grund’. See also CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Västerås, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Västerås’, p1.

³⁵ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Karlstad, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Karlstad’, p3.

³⁶ CoS, Pastoral Ministry Commission, ‘Response of the CoS Pastoral Ministry Commission’, p2.

³⁷ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Göteborg, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Göteborg’, p2; CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Härnösand, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Härnösand’, p1; CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Uppsala, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Uppsala’, p2. It is not clear if the responses refer to the Malta report 1972, or to BEM or something else.

possible to discern three types of responses to the Porvoo solution and episcopal succession:

1. The first group represents most of the responses. They noted that there is agreement about episcopacy and succession as a natural consequence of earlier ecumenical dialogues. Some noted that this had been achieved through a change of the traditional positions of both Anglicans and Lutherans. The treatment of episcopal ministry in the PCS was said to be exemplary,³⁸ or to “correspond well with the understanding” of the CoS.³⁹ The chapter of Härnösand noted that:

The mechanical understanding of transmission in the act of ordination gives way to a holistic view, where faithfulness to the apostolic witness and the characteristics of the church of the first Christians have been given stronger significance. ... We welcome this viewpoint and see in it an opening for continued ecumenical work.⁴⁰

2. The second group is close to the first, and interprets the PCS in the same way but with a greater emphasis on the line of ordination. The Chapter and the Diocesan board of Visby wrote:

Together with the Lutheran Churches of Finland, Estonia, Latvia and the Anglican Churches of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, the Church of Sweden represents an episcopal continuity, with great importance for ecumenical bridge-making. The Danish and Norwegian folk-churches also have a high valuation of the episcopal structure of office, but with different accents and reservations. Significantly, the preparatory work for the Porvoo Declaration has to a great extent been about ‘the episcopal office in the service of the apostolicity of the church’ – a subject that previously caused the churches difficulties in their relations with each other. A true break-through is marked through the mutual recognition of each other's offices ... [through the] signing of the Porvoo Declaration.⁴¹

³⁸ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Uppsala, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Uppsala’, p2.

³⁹ CoS, Pastoral Ministry Commission, ‘Response of the CoS Pastoral Ministry Commission’, p3. “Som stämmer väl med Svenska kyrkans syn”.

⁴⁰ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Härnösand, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Härnösand’, p1. “den mekaniska synen på överlämnandet i vigningshandlingen får stå tillbaka för en helhetssyn, där troheten mot det apostoliska vittnesbördet och den första kristna kyrkans karaktärsdrag får en starkare roll. Successionen är ett tecken på kyrkans strävan att leva i denna trohet mot uppdraget”.

⁴¹ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Visby, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Visby’, p1; CoS, the Diocese Board of Visby, ‘Response of the Diocese Board of Visby’, p1. “Tillsammans med Finland, Estland, Lettlands lutherska kyrkor och Englands, Skottlands, Wales och Irlands anglikanska kyrkor företräder Svenska kyrkan en episkopal kontinuitet, som är av stor vikt för det ekumeniska brobyggandet. De danska och norska lutherska folkkyrkorna hyser också, om än med delvis andra accenter och förbehåll, en hög värdering av den episkopala ämbetsstrukturen. Betecknande nog har arbetet inför Borgå-deklarationen till stor del handlat om ‘biskopsämbetet i tjänst för kyrkans apostolicitet’. Ett ämne som tidigare berett de berörda kyrkorna vissa svårigheter i umgänget med varandra. Ett verkligt genombrott markeras genom det ömsesidiga erkännandet --- [genom] undertecknandet av Borgå-deklarationen.” A similar

Given the CoS tradition's appreciation of episcopal succession, it is surprising that this position was not emphasised more in the discussion.⁴²

3. The responses of the third group were critical about the stress on episcopal ministry in the PCS, and felt it was over-emphasised and was not representative of the CoS's view. This position was marginal, and was primarily represented by the chapter and the board of the diocese of Karlstad and, to some extent, of the chapter of the diocese of Linköping. The diocese of Karlstad noted that the threefold ministry was introduced late in the CoS's history.⁴³ It also said that the differences between the Anglican and Lutheran understandings of apostolic succession should have been clarified.⁴⁴ Despite its critique of the PCS, the Diocese of Karlstad recommended approval of the PD, based on a unity of doctrine. Behind this evaluation there was a referral to CA 7 and its *satis est* about the true proclamation of the Word and administration of the sacraments.⁴⁵ The response of the diocesan board of Karlstad is interesting, since it is the only institution to link episcopacy and succession in Porvoo to the response of the CoS to the M-part of BEM (1982). The board notes that there is a certain difference between that response and the content of the PCS:

The PCS emphasises very strongly the significance of an apostolic office associated with the so-called historic succession. The historic succession is here considered to be highly desirable, in fact unavoidable. ... The response of the General Synod to BEM points in the opposite direction: 'The continuous chain of ordinations with the laying on of hands since the earliest times – the so-called apostolic succession of ordination – is a valuable symbol, but it is not indefeasible. The CoS does possess such succession, but still recognises ordained ministers in sister churches that lack this formal succession. For us the apostolic succession of doctrine is the essence, not the formal succession of ordination.'⁴⁶

answer was given by The Free Synod in the CoS, 'Response of the Free Synod in the CoS', p1.

⁴² E.g. Brodd, *Evangelisk katolicitet*, p124ff; Fransson, *Kristi ämbete*, 29ff; Blennow, *Prästämvetet*, 79ff.

⁴³ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Karlstad, 'Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Karlstad', p1.

⁴⁴ CoS, the Diocese Board of Karlstad, 'Response of the Diocese Board of Karlstad', p1.

⁴⁵ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Karlstad, 'Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Karlstad', p2; CoS, the Diocese Board of Karlstad, 'Response of the Diocese Board of Karlstad', p2.

⁴⁶ CoS, the Diocese Board of Karlstad, 'Response of the Diocese Board of Karlstad', p3; Also the chapter of Linköping was critical to the understanding of ordained ministry and episcopacy in the PCS with reference to the answer 1922. CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Linköping, 'Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Linköping', p1f. "I Borgå-överenskommelsen betonas mycket starkt betydelsen av ett apostoliskt ämbete med s.k. historisk succession. Den historiska successionen anses här vara mycket önskvärd, praktiskt taget oundgänglig. Kyrkomötets svar på BEM-dokumentet pekar i detta hänseende i motsatt riktning: "Den kontinuerliga kedjan till äldsta tid av ordinatorer med handpåläggning – s.k. apostolisk ordinationssuccession – är en värdefull symbol, men den är inte omistlig. Svenska kyrkan äger en sådan succession men erkänner ändå ämbetsbärare i systerkyrkor som saknar denna formala succession. För

The CoS's response to BEM has been criticised internally as contrasting with the understanding of episcopacy and ordination in CO 1571 and the development of the threefold order in the CoS.⁴⁷ The response to BEM, referred to here, mirrors the answer by the Swedish Bishops' Conference to the CoE in 1922. It states that the ordering of ordained ministry cannot be regarded as necessary for the unity of the church.⁴⁸ The Central Board also referred to this answer from the Swedish bishops. I will return to this issue in Chapter 13 and 14.

In the third group, an anchoring of its responses in earlier ecumenical agreements as found in the two first groups was not present. In the responses of the chapters of the dioceses of Karlstad and Linköping, the Porvoo solution is not seen as a mutual Anglican and Lutheran change of understanding, but as something that is to some extent foreign to the CoS. The diocesan board of Karlstad stated that there is a need for further clarification about the ordained ministry and its relationship to episcopacy and succession, and asked for a new way of thinking. This is surprising, since the claim of the PCS is to present just such a new thinking, based on a deeper understanding of apostolicity and succession.⁴⁹

Some responses, both positive and critical, held that the role of the parish had been relegated to the background in the PCS.⁵⁰ *Evangeliska Fosterlandsstiftelsen* (the Swedish Evangelical Mission) wrote:

The emphasis on the bishop's office as a "visible sign" (58.a.vi.) is present in several sections, and this is understandable, considering who have been in dialogue. At the same time, it is unfortunate that this agreement also takes part in the trend today of emphasising episcopacy as a uniting factor and sign (58.b.vi.), while that which is totally basic to the church – i.e. the people of God – is almost ignored.⁵¹

oss är det den apostoliska lärotraditionen som är den väsentliga, inte den formala ordinations-successionen."

⁴⁷ LRCDS, *The Office of Bishop*, p51ff.

⁴⁸ CoS, 'Church of Sweden's Response to BEM', p138.

⁴⁹ PCS Foreword, §9.

⁵⁰ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Linköping, 'Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Linköping', p1f; CoS, Pastoral Ministry Commission, 'Response of the CoS Pastoral Ministry Commission', p3.

⁵¹ CoS, the Swedish Evangelical Mission, 'Response of the Swedish Evangelical Mission', p1. The Swedish Evangelical Mission is a 19th century revival movement in the CoS: "Betonningen av biskopsämbetet som ett "synligt tecken" (58.a.vi) förekommer på flera ställen och kan väl vara begripligt utifrån vilka som fört samtal med varandra. Samtidigt är det olyckligt att också denna överenskommelse så kraftigt ansluter till en trend i dag att betona episkopatet som enande faktor och tecken (58.a.vi), medan det för kyrkan helt grundläggande – nämligen gudsfolket – knappast märks alls."

This critique is surprising considering the *communio* ecclesiology in Porvoo and its emphasis on the church as the people of God.⁵²

B. The understanding of unity in the chapters' responses: Several of the responses stated that the PCS was important because it strengthened communion, not only with the Anglican churches, but also with the other churches in the Nordic countries and, in particular, with the Baltic churches.⁵³ This emphasis expressed both explicit and implicit appreciation for episcopal succession and its importance for the unity of the church. The chapter of Strängnäs wrote:

Equally valuable is that the Evangelic-Lutheran churches in the Nordic and Baltic countries have come closer to each other. In that context the description of the statement of the episcopal office and succession is particularly valuable. It is further worth noting that the statement shows that the Church of Sweden's understanding of itself is enriched by ecumenical dialogues.⁵⁴

The chapter of the diocese of Strängnäs said that the PCS could have a uniting function for the inner life of the churches. While the understanding of unity in this response is organic and open to influence from other churches, some other answers spoke of a more functional understanding of unity – unity as cooperation.⁵⁵

The only elaborated negative critique of the PCS was formulated by the Diocesan Chapter of Karlstad. It stated positively that “on the basis of the great degree of positive agreement on theological questions, it is possible to deepen practical ecclesial cooperation in a number of areas”.⁵⁶ This concept of unity conforms with the Karlstad interpretation of CA 7. Historically this was a common understanding in the CoS, although modified by the church's tradition. However, as the chapter of Karlstad also notes, there has been a

⁵² Cf. PCS, §38.

⁵³ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Strängnäs, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Strängnäs’, p1; CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Visby, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Visby’, p1; CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Uppsala, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Uppsala’, p2f; The Free Synod in the CoS, ‘Response of the Free Synod in the CoS’, p1.

⁵⁴ CoS, the Central Board, ‘Svenska kyrkans centralstyrelses skrivelse till kyrkomötet 1994:5’, p8. ”Lika betydelsefullt är att de evangelisk-lutherska kyrkorna i Norden och Baltikum kommit varandra närmare. I det sammanhanget är överenskommelsens beskrivning av biskopsämbetet och biskopssuccessionen särskilt värdefull. Det är vidare värt att notera att överenskommelsen visar att genom ekumeniska samtal berikas och tydliggörs Svenska kyrkans syn på sig själv.” It should be noted that Bishop Jonas Jonsson, former president of the LWF, apart from his chairmanship of the chapter of Strängnäs, was also chairman for both the Church of Sweden Mission and the Church of Sweden Abroad (SKUT). Bishop Jonsson thereby signed no fewer than three different responses to the Central Board's call for submission. He was also a member of the Diocesan board of Strängnäs, which, however, did not send a response; and as a bishop he was also a member of the CoS Doctrinal Commission.

⁵⁵ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Karlstad, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Karlstad’, p1.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p1. “Domkapitlet delar uppfattningen att det utifrån en övervägande positiv samsyn i teologiska frågor är möjligt att på ett antal områden fördjupa ett praktiskt-kyrkligt samarbete.”

development in the CoS that is related to the three great movements of 20th century Christianity: the liturgical, exegetical, and patristic resources in the ecumenical movement. Considering the critique, it is somewhat surprising that the Chapter of Karlstad recommended that the PCS be signed. At the same time, the diocese of Karlstad raised a very crucial issue for the CoS: that it needed to clarify its understanding of ordained ministry and succession. This is partly found in the Swedish bishops' letter of 1990, *Bishop, priest and deacon in the CoS*,⁵⁷ and through the approval of the PD a new and important stand has been taken. In contrast, the *CoS Theological Committee* noted that the theological analysis of the PCS seemed at times to be incomplete. "In the material presented to us it leaves out some interesting theological explanations of the respective Lutheran and Anglican teaching about church and sacraments."⁵⁸ The Committee asked for an ongoing study of the ecclesiological consequences.

C. Possible consequences of Porvoo: Since most institutions regarded the PCS as a natural outcome of earlier agreements, they did not concentrate primarily on the content of the PCS. They focused, rather, on the implementation of the agreement and asked for clarification of the practical consequences of the agreement. Several responses emphasised the need for a faithful implementation of the commitments of the PD. The Chapter of Uppsala underlined the importance of removing obstacles to closer communion. The Diocese of Strängnäs stressed that the obligation listed in the §58 "should be taken seriously. The chapter would like especially to emphasise the importance of creating appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation to determine issues of faith and order, life and service,"⁵⁹ since this kind of consultation would positively contribute to forming the future of the CoS. In many of the responses there was a willingness to implement the ecclesiology of the PCS in the CoS and to realise visible and structural unity. Several answers emphasised that they saw the PCS as an agreement in principle, and that approval required follow-up and a continuing process. The Central Board noted this, and urged the establishment of a contact group for the Porvoo Communion as soon as possible.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ CoS, Svenska kyrkans biskopsmöte, *Biskop, präst och diakon i Svenska kyrkan*; also in English translation CoS, the Bishops' Conference, *Bishop, Priest and Deacon in the CoS*.

⁵⁸ CoS, the Theological Committee, 'Response of the CoS Theological Committee', p1. "I det presenterade materialet saknas några intressanta dogmhistoriska, och för den vidare tolkningen värdefulla teologiska klargöranden av luthersk respektive anglikansk kyrko- och sakramentslära."

⁵⁹ CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Strängnäs, 'Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Strängnäs', p1. "Det är väsentligt att dessa förpliktelser tas på allvar. Domkapitlet vill särskilt understryka vikten av att lämpliga former för kollegialt och konciliärt rådslag vad gäller avgörande frågor om tro och kyrkoordning, liv och tjänst åstadkommes."

⁶⁰ CoS, the Central Board, 'Svenska kyrkans centralstyrelses skrivelse till kyrkomötet 1994:5', p9; CoS, the Ecumenical Commission of the General Synod, 'Statement by the Ecumenical Commission of the CoS General Synod', p4; CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Uppsala, 'Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Uppsala', p1.

3.2.2. The basis for the decision of the Central Board

The Central Board recommended that the General Synod subscribe to the PD, presenting a 61-page basis for the decision, including the PCS in Swedish. The Central Board described the background to the statement, the history of relations between CoS and the CoE, the considerations and decision of the Central Board, including a comprehensive overview of the comments from the chapters, and other responses that were submitted. The board characterises the PCS as follows:

The goal of the Anglo-Nordic group of conversation has been to bring further, deepen, and more clearly manifest togetherness between our respective churches. The Central Board regards the agreement hereby signified partly as a natural consequence of our churches' common understanding of doctrine, and partly as a very important step on the road to a further church communion whose practical realisation is a challenge for the future.⁶¹

In the different responses in the CoS there is notably little theological analysis, either in the responses that were submitted or in the Central Board's basis for the decision. This is probably because the PCS was not seen as controversial, but rather as an extension of an already existing agreement between the CoS and the CoE to the other Nordic-Baltic churches.⁶² The reason for Swedish approval is, instead, given in the historical review by the Central Board. The review is one of the most comprehensive descriptions given of the Porvoo solution, without any comment on the actual agreement. The historical presentation describes the relationship between the CoS and the CoE, how the bishops of the CoS "have been ordained with the laying on of hands ever since the days of Archbishop Stefan" of Uppsala (1164),⁶³ and particularly the relationship between the CoS and the CoE from 1909 onward. The presentation then describes the development of the *Anglican-Lutheran International Conversations* (ALIC) and the *Anglican-Lutheran European Regional Commission* (ALERC) and the results of these conversations. The Central Board's answer notes that both the Anglicans and the Lutherans have broadened their understanding of apostolic succession, and that there is a mutual "change of position": "The Anglicans put greater em-

⁶¹ CoS, the Central Board, 'Svenska kyrkans centralstyrelses skrivelse till kyrkomötet 1994:5', p8. "Den anglo-skandinaviska samtalsgruppens arbetsmål har varit att vidareföra, fördjupa och ytterligare manifestera samhörigheten våra respektive kyrkor emellan. Den överenskommelse som härigenom träffats ser Centrastyrelsen dels som en naturlig konsekvens av våra kyrkors läromässiga samsyn, dels som ett mycket viktigt steg på väg mot en vidare kyrkogemenskap vars konkretisering utgör en utmaning för framtiden."

⁶² E.g. The Free Synod in the CoS, 'Response of the Free Synod in the CoS', p1; Cf. Harlin, 'Anglikaner och lutheraner i förpliktande ekumenik', p9.

⁶³ CoS, the Central Board, 'Svenska kyrkans centralstyrelses skrivelse till kyrkomötet 1994:5', p4. "[Med handpåläggning från biskop till biskop] hade Svenska kyrkans ämbetsbärare vigts allt sedan ärkebiskop Stefans dagar."

phasis on the succession of doctrine than on the succession of ordination”,⁶⁴ and the Lutherans have been influenced by the BEM document and recognise episcopal succession, which was formulated in the Helsinki report,⁶⁵ “as a sign of the apostolicity of the church as a whole”. The Central Board stated that, after the Helsinki report, the thought of a real communion grew, and in the Niagara Report of 1987 the question of *episcopé* was linked to the mission of the church.

In the conversations this function [i.e. *episcopé*] was related to the mission of the church in the New Testament and the early church and to the calling to the whole people of God to witness today. Through this the question about apostolic succession was not related to one criterion but to many. The problem of the relation between the Anglican succession of office and the Lutheran succession of true doctrine seemed to be overcome through that.⁶⁶

According to the Central Board, the differences between the two ecclesial traditions were thus overcome. The Central Board describes the PCS as “partly a bringing together of the churches beyond earlier common understandings, and partly the fruit of the reports of Pullach, Cold Ash, Niagara Falls and Helsinki”.⁶⁷ The conclusion that emerges from the historical review is that, because the obstacles of 150 years of relationship had now been overcome, the natural consequence would be that the Porvoo solution is also applicable to the CoS. Consequently, the Central Board recommended that the General Synod approve the PD.

The argument of the Central Board is based on the assumption that the CoS is one of many Lutheran churches. Although it has been common for the CoS to argue in this way, it is not axiomatic that this should have been its perspective. From a historical perspective, as well as relating to the Porvoo process itself, this approach is not self-evident, as demonstrated by the responses to the document. As we saw in Chapter 2, in the 18th century Johannes Gezelius, the bishop of Åbo/Turku – at that time a part of the CoS – characterised the CoE as the church that was closer to the CoS than any other church.⁶⁸ The Doctrinal Commission of the CoS regarded the PCS “as an extension of the relationship of the CoS with the CoE, and also expands it to

⁶⁴ Ibid., p6.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p7; See also SPT, ‘Ledare: Breddad Anglikansk-Luthersk Gemenskap’, p91f which with appreciation describes this broadened perspective on apostolicity and succession.

⁶⁶ CoS, the Central Board, ‘Svenska kyrkans centralstyrelses skrivelse till kyrkomötet 1994:5’, p7. ”I samtalen relaterades denna funktion [episkopé] till kyrkans mission i Nya Testamentet och urkyrkan samt till hela Guds folks kallelse till vittnesbörd idag. Därigenom kom frågan om apostolisk succession inte längre att relateras till ett enda kriterium utan till många. Problemet om förhållandet mellan anglikanernas succession i ämbetet och lutheranernas succession i den rätta läran tycktes därigenom vara utagerat.”

⁶⁷ Ibid., p8.

⁶⁸ See Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p122, 132 for a description of the relations between the CoS and the CoE in the 18th century.

embrace other Lutheran and Anglican churches”.⁶⁹ In this approach the Commission acted consistently with the CoS approach from the beginning of the Porvoo debate, seeing the dialogue as primarily a bilateral dialogue between a Nordic, and later Nordic-Baltic, Lutheran communion and the CoE, and later with the Anglican churches in the rest of Britain and Ireland.⁷⁰ In the writing of the Central Board, the position of the CoS is not explicitly stated other than that it is part of the general Lutheran tradition. It is stated that the Lutherans have been influenced by BEM to recognise episcopal succession as a sign, but it is not said that this was the position of the CoS before BEM, because of its history and identity. The position of the CoS is not explicitly expressed in the Board’s recommendation, apart from a quotation from the letter to the CoE by the Swedish Bishops’ Conference in 1922.⁷¹

As described above, the bishops’ statement was also referred to in the answers from two diocesan chapters. The references to this important text in the relationship between the CoS and the CoE is not surprising in itself, but it is surprising that there has been no reflection on the form of the threefold ministry in relation to the development of order in the CoS since 1909. Neither is there any reflection on the CoS’s practical approach to its episcopal succession, and in particular in the CoS’s international engagement. Historically the CoS has introduced episcopacy in succession in a number of churches in Asia, Africa, and Europe. This practice was particularly represented by Archbishop Nathan Söderblom,⁷² who himself was one of the theologians behind the bishops’ answer in 1922.⁷³

The practice of the Swedish episcopate and the development of the threefold order in the CoS bears witness to the tension in the understanding of order in the CoS. On the one hand, it is loyal to its own tradition of ordination, episcopacy as formulated in the CO 1571 and perceived as a gift of the Holy Spirit; and on the other hand, loyal to the Lutheran Federation that was formed at the beginning of the 20th century, based on confessional writings and not on order.

In its argument in support of approval, the Central Board had no reason to emphasise this tension. It did note that the CoS had preserved episcopal succession, and that it valued it – as stated in the CO 1571 and in the letter of 1922; but since the tension was overcome through the deeper understanding in the PCS, there was no need to problematise the issue further. This is not

⁶⁹ CoS, Doctrinal Commission, ‘Statement of the CoS Doctrinal Commission’, p6; See also CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Luleå, ‘Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Luleå’, p1. “Den vidareför Svenska kyrkans relation till Church of England och utvidgar dem till att omfatta andra lutherska och anglikanska kyrkor.”

⁷⁰ Cf. Harlin, ‘Nordic Preparations for the Porvoo Process’, p201ff.

⁷¹ CoS, the Central Board, ‘Svenska kyrkans centralstyrelses skrivelse till kyrkomötet 1994:5’, p5. About the answer 1922 see Chapter 2.2.2 and 13.2.

⁷² E.g. Furberg, *Ett ekumeniskt tecken*; Jonson, *Nathan Söderblom*, Chapters 25, 26.

⁷³ Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*, p213, 260f.

explicitly said in the argument, but the Central Board states that the Lutherans have changed their position and recognise episcopal succession “as a sign of the apostolicity of the church as a whole”. What this means, however, is not explained further in the recommendation of the Central Board, nor in any other response in the Swedish Porvoo debate.

Several institutions noted that episcopal succession is one of several signs of the apostolicity of the church, a formulation with which they agreed. Some of those particularly emphasised the word ‘one’. The Swedish responses do not reflect on whether this means that the sign of episcopal succession is not necessary, but only one of many replaceable signs. The reference to the bishops’ answer of 1922 might imply that this is the case for some of the institutions; but from the responses of most of them, it is not possible to say.

4. The Porvoo debate in the Church of England

The Porvoo debate in the Church of England (CoE) resulted in almost unanimous approval of the PCS and its declaration. The PCS caused some debate in the media in England – unlike in the CoS, but like that in the ELCD, even if not of the same magnitude. Not surprisingly, the focus in this debate was different from that in the ELCD. Whereas the focus in Denmark was on re-summing episcopal succession and its meaning or non-meaning, the focus in England was on the broader perspective of apostolic succession, and on the recognition of ordained ministry in churches that had had a break in the episcopal succession. Behind this focus was the Porvoo intention to reverse the negative verdict of the Oslo Report 1951 on episcopal ministry in the western Nordic churches.¹

The material investigated in this chapter comprises documents from the formal decision-making bodies of the CoE and its different commissions, as well as articles, letters, and lectures related to the Porvoo debate in England. Lectures or articles by officials of the CoE in other contexts than the CoE's Porvoo debate will not be treated at this point. This is the case for a number of articles and lectures by the CoE's ecumenical officers, Mary Tanner and Colin Podmore, as well as for the CoE's Porvoo delegates: Bishops David Tustin, John Hind, and Stephen Sykes. These writings will be investigated later in my treatment of the international debate. The aim of this chapter is to understand what interpretations of the PCS and what arguments for or against the agreement were used in the internal debate in England. I write 'England', not 'in the CoE', because I will also analyse articles by one RC theologian, Edward Yarnold, since they formed part of the public debate in England and of the reception of the PCS in the CoE.² I will begin with an overview of the constitutional situation in the CoE, because it witnesses to the understanding of church and organisation and was determinative for how the PCS was received in the CoE.

¹ See chapter 2.2.2. and CoE, Anglican Committee Appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury for the Oslo Meeting, 'The Oslo Report 1951'.

² For a short overview of the implementation of the Porvoo Communion in the CoE after 1996 see Hill, 'Reflections on the Reception and Implementation of Porvoo'.

4.1. The Constitution of the Church of England

As in Denmark and Sweden, the motivation for the break of the English church province, *ecclesia anglicana*, with Rome was mainly political. Henry VIII's desire to divorce Catherine of Aragon played its role; so did the Pope's canonical doubts of a possible annulment being re-inforced by the presence in Rome of soldiers of Catherine's nephew.³ Behind the whole Reformation process was the mediaeval discussion about authority in the church and the role of council, pope and monarch.⁴ The break with Rome was formulated by Henry VIII as that, according to Scripture, the Bishop of Rome "has no greater jurisdiction in England than any other foreign bishop" and that the England's king is "the only supreme head in earth of the Church of England".⁵ From the reign of Elizabeth in 1558, *supreme head* was changed to *supreme Governor*, since the only head of the church is Christ.

The main theological architect behind the English Reformation was the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer. His conviction was that the CoE, in continuity with the mediaeval church and through the theology formulated by the Reformers, was more faithful to the teaching of the Bible and the early church than the teaching of those who continued to support the Pope. The CoE as an independent national church was consolidated during the reign of Elizabeth by the writings of Richard Hooker, in which he defended the CoE as a *via media* church.⁶

As in the rest of Europe, the close relationship between church and state began to change during the 19th century. An increasing confessional consciousness about Anglicanism, the presence of other believers, and the emerging Anglican communion contributed to this change.⁷ This also had consequences for the organisation of the CoE and its two metropolitan provinces of Canterbury and York. Early in English church history, important decisions were taken by bishops gathered in councils. In the 14th century other members of the clergy were also included in those synodical gatherings, or to use the formal term, convocations. At the Reformation this system was subordinated to the crown and Parliament. In 1902 and 1919 the system was gradually changed, and lay representatives also included. In 1970 this was re-organised as the present *General Synod*, with the three houses of bishops, clergy, and laity. The House of Bishops consists of the forty-four diocesan bishops together with seven elected suffragan bishops and the suffragan bishop of Dover (who in practice runs the diocese of Canterbury). The House of Clergy consists of five cathedral deans, the dean of Jersey or Guernsey, six representatives of the universities, two representatives of the

³ Haugaard, 'From the Reformation to the Eighteenth Century', p6.

⁴ Avis, *Beyond the Reformation?*, p17ff.

⁵ Haugaard, 'From the Reformation to the Eighteenth Century', p6.

⁶ Davie, *A Guide to the Church of England*, p3ff, 67.

⁷ Avis, 'What Is "Anglicanism"?', p460f.

religious communities, three principal chaplains from the armed forces and the Chaplain General of the Prison Service, one hundred and eighty-three other representatives of the clergy, and up to five co-opted members. The House of Laity is made up of two representatives of religious communities, three lay members of the armed services, the First and Second Church Estates Commissioners, 195 other lay representatives, and up to five co-opted members. Through its organisation the General Synod relates directly to the bishops, clergy and laity in the dioceses and parishes, as well as to other parts of the church such as religious orders and special pastoral services such as military and prison chaplaincies.⁸

The House of Bishops has a special responsibility for doctrine, liturgy, and the administration of the sacraments, as well as the selection and training of the clergy and nationally-authorised lay ministers. In order to co-ordinate, promote, aid and further the work and mission of the CoE, the Archbishops' Council was established in 1999. The council, equivalent to the CoS Church Board, consists of the two archbishops, representatives of the three houses of the General Synod, a Church Estates Commissioner, and six persons appointed by the Archbishops.⁹

Ecumenical relations in the CoE are administered by the *Council for Christian Unity* (CCU). In the reception of the PCS it discussed how the agreement would be handled in the CoE. The Synodical Government Measure 1969 (Schedule 2) provides for certain items of legislation to be designated as so-called 'Article 8 business'. This article states that:

(1) A Measure or Canon providing for permanent changes in the Services of Baptism or Holy Communion or in the Ordinal, or a scheme for a constitutional union or a permanent or substantial change of relationship between the Church of England and another Christian body, being a body a substantial number of whose members reside in Great Britain, shall not be finally approved by the General Synod unless, at a stage determined by the Archbishops, ... the scheme, or the substance of the proposals embodied therein, has been approved by a majority of the dioceses at meetings of their Diocesan Synods, or, in the case of the Diocese in Europe, of the Bishop's Council and Standing Committee of that diocese.

(1a) If the Archbishops consider that this Article should apply to a scheme which affects the Church of England and another Christian body but does not fall within paragraph (1) of the Article, they may direct that this Article shall apply to that scheme, and where such a direction is given this Article shall apply accordingly.¹⁰

The Nordic-Baltic Porvoo Churches may or may not have a "substantial number of members residing in Great Britain", but this is not the sole criterion for Article 8 business. A decision referred to as 'Article 8 business'

⁸ Davie, *A Guide to the Church of England*, p31ff.

⁹ Ibid., p35.

¹⁰ Hill, *Ecclesiastical Law*, p43.

means that the decision shall first be taken provisionally in the General Synod and then debated and voted on at diocesan level before it can be finally approved in the General Synod. The precondition is that, only if at least 23 (out of 44) dioceses vote in favour, can this business come back to the General Synod for Final Approval. Designation as 'Article 8 business' adds about a year to the time-scale. The value of this is that the level of awareness about the issue discussed is greatly raised throughout the CoE.

4.2. The process of the CoE Porvoo debate

On 14 October 1993, the CoE's *Council for Christian Unity* (CCU) discussed the PCS. It decided to approve the PCS and send it to the House of Bishops for further consideration. The document was to be published on 18 November 1993, together with a collection of essays and, at the suggestion of the Bishop of Oslo Andreas Aarflot, to be entitled *Together in Mission and Ministry*.¹¹ It was also planned that before the release, copies should be circulated to some 600 members of the General Synod, together with an explanatory introduction of the PCS to help in interpreting and understanding its consequences.¹² At the same meeting, the CCU expressed the wish that the PD be sent to the Diocesan Synods for discussion.¹³ During the autumn of 1993, the CCU held a teach-in for all diocesan Ecumenical Officers in order to advise their Bishop's Councils about the best way to prepare for a well-informed debate at the Diocesan Synods. The CCU then established a list of expert speakers on Porvoo who could be invited to give an opening presentation in the dioceses.¹⁴ In December 1993 a one-day seminar was held for senior representatives of non-Anglican churches in England.¹⁵

On 12th January 1994 the chairman of the CCU, Bishop David Tustin (who had been the co-chair of the Porvoo Conversations) introduced the PCS to the House of Bishops.¹⁶ The House decided to support the document in General Synod and to publish a supporting document called *Apostolicity and Succession*.¹⁷ In parallel with the final work of the Porvoo Conversations, the CoE's *Faith and Order Advisory Group* (FOAG) had worked out a text on

¹¹ Suggested by the bishop of Oslo Andreas Aarflot in a letter to the Anglican co-chairman the bishop of Grimsby David Tustin: Aarflot, 'Letter to Bishop David Tustin'; Shortt, 'Anglicans and Nordics Seek Unity'.

¹² CoE, CCU, 'General Synod 1993: A Report'.

¹³ CoE, CCU, 'Minutes, the Porvoo Common Statement (CCU/18 and 28/93)'.

¹⁴ Tustin, 'The Impact of the Porvoo Agreement', p165ff; Also in; Ibid., p59ff.

¹⁵ CoE, CCU, 'Aide-Memoire'.

¹⁶ Tustin, 'CCU, The Porvoo Common Statement, Presentation for the House of Bishops', p1ff; See also Tustin, 'Background Paper about the PCS - Dispatch in December 1993 to the House of Bishops from the CCU'.

¹⁷ CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*; Church Times, 'Bishops Widen Limits of Apostolic Succession'.

the subject of apostolicity and succession for the General Synod.¹⁸ The text, published in May 1994, was a consequence of the so-called *Cameron Report* in 1991, *Episcopal Ministry: The Report of the Archbishops' Group on the Episcopate*.¹⁹ The study document became a preparatory text for the Porvoo debate, and quotes extensively from chapter IV of the PCS.²⁰ According to Tustin, the study document “showed that developments in Anglican thinking on this question were part of an emerging ecumenical consensus. To a large extent this paper prepared the theological ground for the main debate which was to follow.”²¹

During the autumn of 1993 and spring of 1994 the question of whether the PD should be regarded as *Article 8 business* was discussed. As late as the CCU meeting on 17th-18th May 1994, it was divided over the matter, with a narrow majority against the use of *Article 8*. In May 1994 *The Standing Committee* supported the use of *Article 8*, and the Archbishops of Canterbury and York directed that the PD should be designated as *Article 8 business*.²² At the General Synod in July 1994 the PD received Provisional Approval “without a single criticism or query”,²³ and the PD was sent to Diocesan Synods for further discussion and voting, according to the regulations for *Article 8 business*. The Diocesan Synods were obliged to give a straight answer – ‘Yes’ or ‘No’ – to the question that was worded as follows: “That this Synod approves the Porvoo Declaration as set out in the Appendix to the *Article 8 Reference*.”²⁴ According to *Article 8*, if any Diocesan Synod wishes to express a more nuanced response, it may add a “Following Motion”; but it is not obliged to.

The CCU had originally asked for “a two-year period for study and debate so that a wide education process could take place in deaneries and parishes. However, the Standing Committee wanted the PD to be returned by the 1995 July General Synod. The advantage of this was that the Final Approval would be sought from the same Synod which had given Provisional Approval, without an election between the two. It also had the advantage that the CoE’s timetable matched more closely the timetables of other churches involved in the Agreement.”²⁵ To make the PCS intelligible to the clergy and lay representatives who would vote in each diocese, the CCU published a

¹⁸ CoE, CCU, ‘Minutes, Conversations with the Nordic and Baltic Churches (CCU/41/91)’.

¹⁹ CoE, House of Bishops, *Bishops in Communion*, pvii.

²⁰ CoE, CCU, ‘Minutes, Anglican-Nordic-Baltic Process (CCU 5/93)’; CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*.

²¹ Tustin, ‘The Impact of the Porvoo Agreement’, p165; *ibid.*, p59f.

²² CoE, CCU, ‘Minutes, Porvoo Progress’; CoE, CCU, *The Porvoo Declaration*, p1.

²³ The Tablet Reports, ‘Anglicans Hold on to Establishment’, p24; See also McHenry, ‘Well Done, Synod, in Summer ’94’; and CoE, General Synod, ‘General Synod 1994’.

²⁴ CoE, CCU, *The Porvoo Declaration*, p1.

²⁵ CoE, House of Bishops, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’, p14f; See also; CoE, the Standing Committee, ‘General Synod 1995: Report by the Standing Committee’, p1; Podmore, ‘Reception Timetable: Consideration of the Porvoo Common Statement’; CoE, CCU, ‘General Synod 1994: A Further Report’.

booklet that was sent to all members of Diocesan Synods. The booklet contained a Memorandum about Article 8 business and the Porvoo debate, the PD, and a study-guide that set out the main issues of the PCS.²⁶ The CCU also organised seminars and offered expert speakers for lectures in the Diocesan Synods. The decision-making process in the CoE meant that about 6,000 people participated in the discussion and decision about the PCS.

The shortened timescale was criticised, and aroused some suspicion that haste might be a way of trying to force the decision through.²⁷ The House of Bishops defended the short timescale, but acknowledged that in some of the dioceses it had led to “frustration and [a] feeling of inadequate processes of education”.²⁸ One debater asked if a short Synodical meeting really met the requirements for reaching a decision about what one speaker had called “the most important decision since the Reformation”, since “a vote in favour of something which has neither been understood or tested is ultimately meaningless”.²⁹ The advantage of the short timescale, however, was that the same General Synod could vote on the PD without an election in between. In the dioceses 5,705 persons voted, and all 44 dioceses approved the PD – in most cases with an overwhelming majority.³⁰ Two Diocesan Synods, Birmingham and Bristol, considered critical *Following Motions*, but in both cases the motions were lost.³¹ At the General Synod on 9 July 1995, the Archbishop of Canterbury, George Carey, summarised the issue and asked the Synod to vote:

The motion before us now is an historic one. As the 103rd Archbishop of Canterbury I find it a great joy that I am in a position to move the motion. The Porvoo Declaration will overcome a separation whose roots reach back to the 16th century. It will bring the historic national Churches of northern Europe into a visible unity for common mission. The Porvoo Declaration has received overwhelming support in the Diocesan Synods. I hope that we shall be able to give it final approval with similar conviction here today. I pray and believe that this agreement will be a significant step towards a much wider unity between the separated parts of Christ's One Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in Europe and beyond.³²

²⁶ CoE, CCU, ‘Minutes, Publications, Study Guide to the PCS’; CoE, CCU, ‘Minutes, Porvoo Progress’; Tustin, ‘GS, Opening Speech by the Bishop of Grimsby’, p209; CoE, CCU, *The Porvoo Declaration*, p1ff.

²⁷ Hunwicke, ‘Porvoo or Not Porvoo?’, p23f; Saunders, ‘How It Works in Practice’; CoE, CCU, ‘Minutes, Porvoo Update’; Kirk, ‘Love in a Cold Climate’.

²⁸ CoE, House of Bishops, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’, p15; See also Morgan, ‘Porvoo: Request for More Time’.

²⁹ Richardson, ‘Is Debate on Porvoo Being Stifled?’

³⁰ CoE, the Standing Committee, ‘General Synod 1995: Report by the Standing Committee’, p3f; Tustin, ‘The Impact of the Porvoo Agreement’, p3.

³¹ CoE, the Standing Committee, ‘General Synod 1995: Report by the Standing Committee’, p8, Annex C.

³² Archbishop George Carey at the General Synod 1995: CoE, General Synod, ‘General Synod 1995’, p209f.

The July 1995 General Synod gave the PD Final Approval with the following numbers:³³

| | Ayes | Noes |
|------------------|------|------|
| House of Bishops | 34 | 0 |
| House of Clergy | 176 | 8 |
| House of Laity | 169 | 15 |

4.3. The English Porvoo debate, 1994-1995

In my continuing treatment of the CoE's Porvoo debate, I next consider the House of Bishops' report on the PCS to the 1995 General Synod,³⁴ alongside the content of *Apostolicity and Succession*, the public debate in the media, and the discussion in the General Synods in 1994 and 1995. There are good reasons to treat the material in this way, since there is an interrelation of substance between them all.

During the time between the two sessions in the General Synod in July 1994 and 1995, and parallel with discussions in the dioceses, there was a public debate in different newspapers and periodicals.³⁵ The debate was not extensive, but it nevertheless revealed different interpretations of the PCS and different ecclesiological emphases, represented by both Anglican and RC debaters. Despite the clear majority of those who approved the PCS, there were also critical voices. The RC theologian Edward Yarnold wrote a negative evaluation of the PCS in which he stated that it represented an ecclesiology that the RCC could not accept.³⁶ The article was published in the *Tablet* in July 1994, a few days before the provisional approval was passed in the CoE's General Synod. Also some Anglo-Catholics reacted with hesitation towards the PCS, since the PCS proposes a different Anglican evaluation of the episcopate in the western Nordic churches than previously. The Anglican theologian John Hunwicke, the chaplain of Lancing College, who later became RC, wrote several critical articles, of which the first was also published in July 1994 in *New Directions*.³⁷ Whether or not connected with Yarnold's approach, its content was confirmed by Yarnold. We have reason to come back to Yarnold's approach when we further investigate RC responses to the PCS.³⁸ Considering the earlier CoE concern about the break of episcopal succession in the Western Nordic churches, it is surprising that,

³³ Ibid., p210.

³⁴ CoE, House of Bishops, 'The Porvoo Agreement'.

³⁵ Articles were published in *the Church Times*, *the Church of England Newspaper*, *the Tablet* and *New Directions*.

³⁶ Yarnold, 'In Line with the Apostles'.

³⁷ Hunwicke, 'Porvoo or Not Porvoo?'

³⁸ See p50, "6.4. Roman Catholic evaluations of the P".

despite expectations in the press of a battle about the PCS in the General Synod,³⁹ resistance to the PCS was not greater, and that there was such consensus in the General Synod and in the 44 dioceses. In this process many Anglo-Catholics also argued in favour of the PCS and gave it their support.⁴⁰ It might be asked whether the wide consensus evident in the Diocesan Synods shows that a broader understanding of apostolicity and succession had already spread further than expected; and, if that is the case, this was in accordance with the recommendations of the Lambeth Conference 1988.⁴¹

No overview was published of the debates that took place in Diocesan Synods during the winter of 1994-1995, and since none of the dioceses formally commented on the PD apart from giving their approval, there is no such material to investigate. However, the House of Bishops sent a report to the General Synod which summarised and commented on the diocesan debates, based on memorandum sent to the CCU secretary Mary Tanner by the various visiting speakers chosen to open the diocesan debates.⁴² The same critiques as in the diocesan discussions were evident in the public debate, as well as at the General Synod on 9 July 1994 and 9 July 1995. Many speakers participated in the respective General Synod debates about the PCS; most were positive, although a few were hesitant.⁴³

In the English Porvoo debate there was agreement between its opponents and proponents that the PCS meant a changed Anglican understanding of apostolicity and succession. The disagreement concerned whether or not this development was possible without abandoning the identity of the Anglican Church. The proponents contended that the PCS was an expression of a deepened understanding of apostolicity, succession, and episcopacy. The opponents argued that the PCS meant a radical re-definition of the traditional Anglican understanding of those matters and that,⁴⁴ if the CoE approved the PD, this would adversely affect relations with the RC and Orthodox churches.⁴⁵ Behind the whole of the CoE's Porvoo debate was the House of Bishops' occasional paper *Apostolicity and Succession*, in which the bishops argue for a deeper understanding of apostolicity and succession. Archbishop Carey stated in the preface that the paper should "provide an important background for the debate on the *Porvoo Common Statement*".⁴⁶ The bishops

³⁹ Gledhill, 'Opponents Take Battle to Synod'.

⁴⁰ Podmore, 'A Draft of Answer to J Hunwicke's Article in New Direction (Unpublished)'; Church Times, 'General Synod: Nordic Unity Agreement Is Signed'.

⁴¹ CoE, *Lambeth Conference 1988*, p204ff.

⁴² E.g. Tustin, 'Report to Mary Tanner at the CCU'.

⁴³ In each of the General Synods of 1994 and 1995, 12 speakers participated in the debate. CoE, General Synod, 'General Synod 1995'; CoE, General Synod, 'General Synod 1994'.

⁴⁴ Clark, 'A "Maastricht" for the Church'; After the approval of the PCS also Ellis, 'Women, Porvoo and Apostolicity'; Cf. Yarnold's critique; Yarnold, 'In Line with the Apostles'.

⁴⁵ Hunwicke, 'Porvoo or Not Porvoo?', p7f.

⁴⁶ CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession* Preface.

also argued for the approval of the PCS in their report to the 1995 General Synod.

Prior to treating the debate that took place in the media and at the General Synod, I will investigate the content of *Apostolicity and Succession* and the bishops' report of 1995, and how the House of Bishops argued for the approval of the PCS. I will then examine five different themes touched upon in the English Porvoo debate: 1. The House of Bishops' occasional paper: *Apostolicity and Succession*. 2. The House of Bishops' report to the 1995 General Synod. 3. Critique and defence of the Porvoo solution. 4. Ecumenical consequences of the PCS and its solution. 5. The PCS as opening the way to presbyteral ordinations. 6. The concept and structure of unity in the PCS. 7. Influences on the CoE from the Nordic-Baltic churches

4.3.1. The House of Bishops' occasional paper: *Apostolicity and Succession*

The approach in *Apostolicity and Succession* is ecumenical in a broad sense. Its purpose is to consider whether the CoE can recognise the faith of the church in "the increasingly common ecumenical understanding" of the apostolic faith. In pursuing this purpose, the document repeats questions that are formulated in BEM. In the preface to BEM, the Faith & Order Commission asked the churches to consider four questions, of which the first two were:

1. The extent to which your church can recognize in this text [i.e. BEM] the faith of the church through the ages, and;
2. The consequences your church can draw from this text for its relation and dialogues with other churches, particularly with those churches which also recognize the text as an expression of the apostolic faith.⁴⁷

Apostolicity and Succession deals explicitly with the first question and implicitly with the second, describing what it means to understand both the church as a whole and the ordained ministry as 'apostolic'; and how the succession of bishops in the apostolic ministry is understood as an aspect and a service of the apostolicity of the whole church. In the first chapter the paper demonstrates the "increasingly common ground among churches that apostolicity is a characteristic of the Church as a whole and that apostolicity is to be found in the apostolic life of the whole Church."⁴⁸

The second chapter notes the number of characteristic elements that nurture, maintain, and express the church's apostolicity. Those elements, which are equivalent to what the PCS calls 'signs', are elaborated as follows:

⁴⁷ BEM, Foreword.

⁴⁸ CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*, p13.

Like any other visible society the Church needs signs and instruments of its identity and communal life so that it is confident that it lives, worships and witnesses in continuous historical succession with the apostles. These signs and instruments also ensure that this continuity is recognized by the faithful in each place and from generation to generation. Among the instruments of the Church's continuity in apostolic mission are the continuous and faithful transmission of the Holy Scriptures, the celebration of the sacraments and the service of the apostolic ministry.⁴⁹

Among these signs or elements of the apostolicity of the church as a whole, it is agreed ecumenically that there is a ministry of *episcopé*.

The third chapter describes the ministry that emerged from New Testament times as a “relatively settled and consistent system of threefold ministry” in the patristic centuries.⁵⁰ At the centre of this ministerial system in continuity from the time of the New Testament was the task of the ministry to serve the unity of the community, in relation to the sacred tradition of teaching:

The concept of a sacred tradition of teaching antedates the concept of an apostolic succession of pastors, but the second was seen to be necessary to safeguard the first.⁵¹

Until the Reformation, the bishops of local churches shared through their collegial relationship the care and oversight of the whole church through the collegial relationship of bishops. The Reformers tried to return in different ways to what “they variously understood to be an apostolic Church order so as to safeguard fidelity to the apostolicity of the Church”.⁵² Some abandoned the sign of episcopal order, “others maintained episcopacy, though with a ‘temporary’ break in the form and sign of succession, while others, like the Church of England, continued the episcopal form and sign of succession within the tradition of the Catholic Church”.⁵³ The consensus about the apostolicity of the church as a whole, and the acceptance of the need for a ministry of oversight exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways, should encourage the different churches to follow the suggestion at the end of BEM. In BEM the churches are asked to recognise the apostolic content of each other's respective ministry. Churches without the episcopal succession are asked to recover the sign of episcopal succession and its importance in order to strengthen and deepen the apostolic continuity of their tradition.⁵⁴ According to *Apostolicity and Succession* it is necessary for the churches to “bring into being a single ministry of oversight, for only then will the churches re-

⁴⁹ Ibid., p13.

⁵⁰ Ibid., p17.

⁵¹ Ibid., p21.

⁵² Ibid., p18.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ BEM M§53.

new the ministry of oversight and be able to take common decisions for the whole church, teach together with conviction and engage in common service and mission”.⁵⁵

In the fourth chapter the ecumenical movement’s convergence on apostolicity and succession is further demonstrated. The paper notes that, on the one hand, “there is some degree of consensus that episcopal ministry is normally integral to the community’s continuity in apostolic succession of life and faith.”⁵⁶ On the other hand, the language of BEM does not speak about episcopal succession as a guarantee. This is because no individual bishop alone can provide such assurance. Nevertheless:

The historic episcopal succession is an expression first of Christ’s faithfulness to the Church, second of the Church’s intention to remain faithful to the apostles’ teaching and mission. It is a means both of upholding that intention and of giving the faithful the confident assurance that the Church lives in continuity with the Lord’s apostles and in anticipation of a glory yet to be fully disclosed. It is worth noting that for Irenaeus, Tertullian and others episcopal succession was one of the signs looked for in discerning where the authoritative proclamation of the gospel is to be found. It was not seen as creating or guaranteeing its authority.⁵⁷

It is stated in the paper that apostolicity does not inheres in the person of the bishop alone, but in the local church as a whole. Apostolic succession does not only mean episcopal succession of persons, but also the unbroken continuity of communities.⁵⁸ This understanding is an important part of the convergence that has emerged in the ecumenical movement, which the paper says is consistent with the faith of the CoE. The paper shows further that the PCS represents the same understanding of apostolicity and succession, and is as such an expression of the CoE’s deepened understanding of apostolicity. This understanding is summarised in the fifth chapter in four points, as the CoE affirms:

- The apostolicity of the whole church;
- The place of the apostolic ministry within the apostolicity of the whole Church;
- The inextricable link between the apostolic succession of the whole Church and the apostolic succession of the ministry;
- The place of episcopal ministry in the continuity of the Church.⁵⁹

⁵⁵ CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*, p19.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p23.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p24.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p26.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p27.

Finally, the paper underlines that “all of these moves towards unity are to be seen within one ecumenical movement” and that the CoE’s ecumenical agreements with various churches are “fully consonant” with each other.⁶⁰

4.3.2. The House of Bishops’ report on the PCS

In its report to the July 1995 General Synod, the House of Bishops declared that it gave “full endorsement to the Porvoo Declaration” and “wholeheartedly supports the move to visible unity”.⁶¹ The House gave four reasons for affirming the Porvoo Declaration. 1. The PD opened up the way for a shared “common mission in Northern Europe”, which would give Christians the opportunity to speak together on the great social and moral issues facing Europe today”. The House particularly underlined the opportunity to “support the fragile, emerging democracies of the Baltic States as they seek integration in the European scene”.⁶² 2. It stressed that unity is visible and that this is based on a firm theological basis. The House particularly welcomed “the understanding of the nature of the Church as *koinonia*”. The House further notes the agreement’s consistency with the Anglican Lambeth Quadrilateral, and spells out its appreciation of the PCS’ understanding of apostolicity and episcopacy.

The text properly begins with a consideration of the apostolicity of the whole Church and seeks to understand the apostolic ministry within that broad context. It moves on to consider the way in which the episcopal office serves the apostolic succession of the whole Church, and elucidates the historical episcopal succession as sign.⁶³

The House further stated that it looked forward to learning from the Nordic-Baltic churches “about their exercise and practice of episcopacy”.⁶⁴ 3. The House stated that the PCS is consistent with other ecumenical relationships, and that it:

Belongs within the wider network of ecclesial relationships which we seek to strengthen with our Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant partners. Our conviction is that the visible unity through the PCS would contribute “towards a more inclusive unity of all Christians in this nation, in Europe and worldwide for the sake of the mission and service of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.”⁶⁵

⁶⁰ Ibid., p27ff and p33.

⁶¹ CoE, House of Bishops, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’.

⁶² Ibid., p2.

⁶³ Ibid., p4.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p4f.

4. Finally the House wrote that, in its commending of the PD, it had “taken into consideration the voting in the Diocesan Synods” and stated that “there can have been few proposals in the Church of England’s history which have gained such confident and widespread support”.⁶⁶

In the bishops’ reasoning of their support of the PD, it is possible to discern some of the thinking in the public and diocesan discussion. In its report the House listed and commented on some of the issues raised in the diocesan discussions. Those issues were: implications for mission, episcopal succession, women and ordained ministry, the PCS and the Anglican Communion, the goal of visible unity, and ecumenical implications.⁶⁷ Below I will treat some of those issues. The bishops noted that there had been lively debates in many dioceses, emphasis on the missionary implications of the PCS, that there were more personal contacts with the Nordic-Baltic churches than expected and that not that few dioceses already had close links with dioceses in those churches. The possibility of supporting the Baltic churches at a time of great changes was further emphasised.⁶⁸ Those considerations were also important in the General Synod debates as motivation for the PCS, and were seen as a real benefit of the Porvoo agreement.⁶⁹

4.3.3. The critique and defence of the Porvoo solution

As we have seen, the House of Bishops understood the PCS as being consistent with the Anglican Lambeth Quadrilateral, and appreciated the statement’s understanding of apostolicity and episcopacy. This was exactly what its opponents could not see in it.⁷⁰ In an article in *The Times*, Jonathan Clark, fellow of All Souls’ College in Oxford, argued that the core of Anglican identity would be abandoned through the PCS. The content of his critique was that the PCS explains episcopacy in “bureaucratic rather than sacramental terms”. “Anglicans are turning away from the challenge of reconciliation with the majority in favour of politically easy accommodations with minorities”.⁷¹ Hunwicke agreed with the PCS that apostolicity is broader than just the line of bishops, but;

That doesn’t mean that Episcopal Consecration is unnecessary. There is more to baptism than sloshing water around; but we properly require the use of water if Baptism is to be held valid. ... The early generation of the Christian Church left us with a canonized structure of sacramental practice, just as they

⁶⁶ Ibid., p5.

⁶⁷ Ibid., p6ff.

⁶⁸ Ibid., P5.

⁶⁹ Cf. Tustin, ‘The Meaning of the Porvoo Agreement for the Anglican Churches’, p5.

⁷⁰ Cf. Parrish, ‘Anglican-Methodist Reunion: Sir, - In Your Leader...’

⁷¹ Clark, ‘A “Maastricht” for the Church’. Clark’s approach was influenced by the question of women’s ordination in the CoE, since it was a reaction to Graham, ‘It’s More than Just a Chain of Bishops’ who had linked the PCS to the question of ordination of women.

left us with a definitive Canon of Holy Scripture. It is a very grave matter – and one likely to create new divisions between Christians – to advocate disregarding the sacramental structures which emerged from the sub-apostolic period: arguably we have no right to do so.⁷²

The issue in this critique is the Porvoo solution and the mutual recognition of the episcopal ministries described in §52-53 in the PCS. This acknowledgment was understood by critics as a logical “leap”.⁷³ Their misgivings were confirmed by Yarnold’s article in the *Tablet*. He agreed with the PCS’s stress on the apostolicity of the whole church, but emphasised simultaneously that the sacramental line of bishops is necessary. According to Yarnold the PCS exemplify a fundamental difference between Anglican and RC ecclesiology:

Among [Roman] Catholics the “extraordinary route to episcopal office” remains a tentative suggestion; the tradition that certainly is required in matters concerning the sacraments is likely to prevent the Church from recognising orders without episcopal succession, even on the accepted principle of ecclesia supplet (the implicit action of the Church makes up defect in the administration of sacraments.) ... If Roman Catholics could accept the Porvoo principle, many of the objections to Anglican orders would be nullified. If on the other hand, as seems more probable, they are bound to reject it, a new and important disagreement on the doctrine of ministry will have emerged.⁷⁴

Likewise the secretary of *Forward in Faith*, Geoffrey Kirk, who later became RC, stressed the importance of intention in the PCS, and stated that “the heart of the Porvoo problem is the Church of Denmark”:

No one – English, Swede or Dane – has hitherto claimed that the Reformation in Denmark exhibited the same intention to continue the apostolic ministry as it had been received ‘*from the Apostles’ time*’. On the contrary, Danes have formally acknowledged a deliberate and intentional discontinuity. ... Whatever the Danes thought they were making by the rites they performed at the Reformation and since, they were not and could not have been bishops of the Catholic Church. The priests ordered by them were, in strict consequence, not priests.⁷⁵

The objections raised by Clark, Hunwicke, Kirk and Yarnold were answered by Tustin, Hind, Hill, Arnold, Podmore and Halliburton.⁷⁶ The answers were

⁷² Hunwicke, ‘Porvoo or Not Porvoo?’, p8. As we shall see, this was also an argument used by RC theologians, e.g. the Swiss RC theologian Charles Morerod.

⁷³ See Hunwicke, ‘The Porvoo Leap’.

⁷⁴ Yarnold, ‘In Line with the Apostles’, p30; Cf. Yarnold, ‘Special Report: Flawed Route to Unity’.

⁷⁵ Kirk, ‘Love in a Cold Climate’; Kirk was criticised by; Arnold, ‘Read It Properly Fr Kirk’; and; Halliburton, ‘Good News from a Cold Climate’. Cf. Chapter 14.2.3

⁷⁶ Bishops Tustin and Hind were Porvoo delegates; Hill, who later became a bishop, was like Halliburton a consultant to, and with Podmore part of the staff for, the *Porvoo Conversations*.

published as articles and speeches in different contexts such as the House of Bishops, the General Synod, and the Diocesan Synods.⁷⁷ Halliburton emphasised that “there has never been any question in Denmark or anywhere else in Scandinavia of a presbyterian form of church order”.⁷⁸ This understanding of church, apostolicity, and ordained ministry is why the proponents, like the PCS, emphasised the history of the participating churches to such a great extent, and especially the Reformation history of the ELCD.

The opponents of the Porvoo solution shared with its proponents the conviction that it is the church as a whole that is apostolic, and that the episcopal ministry is an integral part of this ecclesiology. While many in the discussion appreciated a broadened understanding of apostolicity, they did not really deal with how the Porvoo solution was possible,⁷⁹ i.e. the divisive issue. What was controversial was whether the apostolicity of the church could be carried by other means if the sacramental line of bishops was broken. The Porvoo solution was defended with the metaphor of “a rope of several strands. If one strand, such as the personal tactile succession, is broken, other strands, such as, for example, the continuity of historic sees, apostolic succession seen in this case as ‘bottoms on thrones’ rather than hands on heads, can hold it, even though the rope may be weakened.”⁸⁰ The bishop of Newcastle, Alec Graham, explained the solution as part of a broader ecclesiology, and that “the historic episcopate has as its sign the laying on of hands. It is possible to have the sign without the reality (as with *episcopi vagantes*) and the reality without the sign (as in the case of those Nordic-Baltic Churches which for a while lost the sign).”⁸¹

The defence of the PCS did not really satisfy those who stressed the sacramental line of bishops,⁸² and consequently Yarnold answered Bishop Tustin in these terms: “It is of course true ... episcopal continuity must be related to a doctrine of the church as communion. But it is taking a further step altogether when it is affirmed that the historic episcopal succession can be maintained through ‘occasional presbyteral ordination’.”⁸³ In their turn, the defenders gave their assurance that the statement had a firm theological

A few others also participated in the public debate in the media: Graham, ‘It’s More than Just a Chain of Bishops’; Allchin, ‘The Porvoo Leap’; Turner, ‘The Porvoo Leap’.

⁷⁷ Cf. Hill, ‘Anglican Ecumenists’ Two-Pronged Approach’; Hill, ‘The Porvoo Leap: Sir: The Revd J.W. Hunwicke...’; Tustin, ‘Porvoo Principles’; Hind, ‘Porvoo’s Potential’.

⁷⁸ Halliburton, ‘Good News from a Cold Climate’.

⁷⁹ Cf. various speakers at the CoE, General Synod, ‘General Synod 1994’; CoE, General Synod, ‘General Synod 1995’.

⁸⁰ Podmore, ‘Essential Agreement’; Cf. Tanner, ‘The Anglican Position on Apostolic Continuity’, p123.

⁸¹ Graham, ‘It’s More than Just a Chain of Bishops’.

⁸² Cf. Podmore, ‘Essential Agreement’.

⁸³ Yarnold, ‘Porvoo Principles’.

basis,⁸⁴ and elaborated it as in *Apostolicity and Succession*. Bishop Hind emphasised that Anglicans could confidently support the PCS, and that it was not a “bureaucratic rather than a sacramental view of episcopacy”.⁸⁵ In the General Synod 1994 he stated that the PCS integrates:

the episcopates of the divided Churches in a way which will give all members unambiguous confidence about their apostolicity for the future, without at the same time, as so often happens in agreements like this, requiring some Churches to deny some part of what they have received and been graced with in the past, with other words, undermine their confidence in their past.⁸⁶

What made the discussion tricky was that there were different approaches to the issue. The arguments of the opponents were based on the understanding of the sacramental validity of ordination. The proponents stated that “the concept of validity is not used in the Common Statement. Consequently there is no denial of the past apostolic continuity of any church approving the Common Statement”.⁸⁷ No wonder such an approach is in tension with one that looks for a validly-ordained episcopate. The defenders argued from an ecclesiological and historical perspective, seeing the apostolicity of the church as depending on various signs that, to some degree, can compensate for the absence of any one of the signs, and simultaneously challenges the churches to be and become as apostolic as possible. The basis for this understanding is that the whole church is a sign of the Kingdom of God – which, as Arnold explained, changes the perspective from jurisprudence to grace and the activity of God:

In this way the laying on of hands in the historic succession is taken out of the realm of condition and negotiation; it is placed in the realm of grace, of free offer and willing acceptance. The question is whether our churches really do wish to make ‘more visible the unity and the continuity of the Church at all times and in all places’.⁸⁸

This changed perspective has consequences for the traditional way of evaluating episcopal succession as belonging to the church’s *esse*, *bene esse*, or *plene esse*, a terminology not used in the PCS. Bishop Hind explained this consequence during the 1994 General Synod:

⁸⁴ Cf. CoE, House of Bishops, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’, p3; Archbishop Carey, speech, in: CoE, the Standing Committee, ‘General Synod 1995: Report by the Standing Committee’, p186f.

⁸⁵ Hind, ‘Porvoo’s Potential’.

⁸⁶ CoE, General Synod, ‘General Synod 1994’, p213; See also CoE, CCU, ‘General Synod 1993: A Report’, p9.

⁸⁷ CoE, CCU, ‘Aide-Memoire’, p9.

⁸⁸ Arnold, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement and Anglican-Lutheran Relationship’, p19; see also Hill, ‘The Anglo-Nordic-Baltic Conversations’.

It is very easy to mock the rather juridical language of historical tactile episcopal succession and the closely related questions of validity. ... The reality is that the Church as a whole, i.e. the whole Church as a whole, is endowed by God with certain instruments or signs of identity and continuity. In this the word 'sign' which is used very often in the report is intended to be heard in a strong, efficacious and instrumental way and not as a mere signpost or indication. Among these signs of apostolicity of the Church, which essentially means not a characteristic of our own but God's own characteristic of faithfulness to his people, is the historical succession. All the participating Churches of the Nordic, Baltic and British Isles Anglican conversations accept this, although in every single one of them, including the Church of England, judgments vary about quite where this all comes in the hierarchy of truths – which is why the report studiously avoids getting into any kind of pointless discussion about the *esse*, *bene esse* or *plene esse* of the Church; that is simply not in the frame of reference within which we were working.

Even where a formal breach has occurred, it is the judgment of this report ... that, provided certain other instruments can be discerned, it may be possible, right, desirable, even morally imperative, that in the context of an actual scheme for unity the very putting together again of a fuller image and a fuller set of the signs of apostolicity has a substantial effect upon all the elements of apostolicity in the Church. It is not true to say, as I have heard some people say, that it replaces episcopal succession with presbyteral succession. It is not true to say, as I have heard some people say, that it makes the apostolic succession, the historic succession of bishops, a merely optional thing within the Church, provided everything is in place. The whole Church in its whole apostolicity and continuity needs this many-sided, varied and rich diversity of signs.⁸⁹

In contrast to the earlier search for *essentials* of the church, Hind, and Arnold, approached the episcopal ministry through ecclesiology and regarded it as a sign and sacramental instrument of the apostolicity of the church as a whole, with consequences for valuation of ordained ministry. In the end, the advocates' defence convinced most in the CoE, and laid the basis for the nearly unanimous decision.

Those who, like Hunwicke, Clark, Kirk and Yarnold, focused on the validity of the ordained ministry were not convinced by the answer that the sacramental reality of office is carried by more than one means besides episcopal succession. Their question is serious: it is one thing not to talk about validity, but that does not mean that the thing is no longer there. I will come back to the issue of valid ordination in Part III.

4.3.4. Porvoo's ecumenical consequences

The PCS's critics argued that approval of the PCS would turn the CoE in a protestant direction. Hunwicke argued that, since the PCS was a departure

⁸⁹ Bishop John Hind, speech in CoE, General Synod, 'General Synod 1994', p213f; Cf. Bishop Tustin, speech, in *ibid.*, p208f.

from Anglican doctrine on episcopal succession, it would negatively affect the ecumenical relationship between the CoE and the RC and Orthodox Churches. He urged the CoE to consult those churches before it agreed to the PD.

Anglicans would do well to ponder the agreement, signed in 1984, between representatives of the Roman and Orthodox Churches: "The bishop receives the gift of episcopal grace in the sacrament of consecration effected by bishops who have themselves received this gift, thanks to the existence of an uninterrupted series of episcopal ordinations beginning from the holy apostles." If this is what the ancient Churches of East and West think "apostolic succession" means, will our proposed pact with Danish Lutherans place us closer to or further from this teaching?⁹⁰

Hunwicke's conclusion was that the General Synod should delay a decision, and that "Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and Orthodox should 'seek a common way forward with regard to Lutheran ministry'."⁹¹ It was also the RC Yarnold's assumption that "the declaration does exemplify a fundamental difference between Anglican and Roman Catholic understanding of the Church",⁹² which at its core implied the possibility of recognising (or not) orders with a break in the succession.

In contrast with those statements, the assurance was given again and again by the CoE's representatives that the PCS is consistent with other ecumenical agreements, and that drawing nearer to the Nordic-Baltic Lutheran churches does not mean alienation from the RC and Orthodox churches.⁹³ In the 1995 General Synod it was particularly noted by Archbishop Carey that a RC observer had participated in the entire process of writing the PCS.⁹⁴ Ecumenical consistency was also claimed in the House of Bishops' report to the General Synod,⁹⁵ as well as in the PCS itself.⁹⁶ In *Apostolicity and Succession* it is affirmed that:

The agreements set out in *The Porvoo Common Statement* and in *The Meissen Common Statement* are taken to be fully consonant with what Anglicans have said to Old Catholics, Roman Catholics and Orthodox in international

⁹⁰ Hunwicke, 'Rome and Canterbury: Are Anglicans Serious?'; See also The Tablet Reports, 'Northern Europe: Porvoo Agreement in Choppy Waters'.

⁹¹ Hunwicke, 'The Porvoo Leap: Sir: I Warmly Welcome...'; Hunwicke, 'The Porvoo Leap'.

⁹² Yarnold, 'In Line with the Apostles'.

⁹³ Cf. Hill, 'Anglican Ecumenists' Two-Pronged Approach'; Hill, 'The Porvoo Leap: Sir: The Revd J.W. Hunwicke...'; CoE, CCU, 'Some Questions and Answers on "Porvoo"', p1; The bishops Hind, Sykes CoE, the Standing Committee, 'General Synod 1995: Report by the Standing Committee'; Church Times, 'Praise for Nordic and Baltic Pact'.

⁹⁴ Archbishop Carey noted that the RC Henrik Roelvink played a full part in the process: CoE, General Synod, 'General Synod 1995'; Also noted by Hill, 'Anglican Ecumenists' Two-Pronged Approach'.

⁹⁵ CoE, House of Bishops, 'The Porvoo Agreement', p4f.

⁹⁶ PCS Foreword, PCS §60-61.

dialogues. In the same way, Lutherans, Methodists and Reformed have registered important agreements and convergences in areas of faith and order in bilateral dialogues with the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches.⁹⁷

The House of Bishops similarly stated in their report to the 1995 General Synod that “no one reading what the *Porvoo Common Statement* actually says could fail to recognise a fidelity there to the concern for the continuity and unity of the Catholic Church that Anglicans share with Lutherans”.⁹⁸ The assurances did not convince the critics. In his response to Bishop Tustin’s guarantee of ecumenical consistency,⁹⁹ Yarnold stated that if the step taken in the PCS “is to be justified, it must be by further argument, and not simply by an appeal to ARCIC”.¹⁰⁰ Tustin answered Yarnold:

[The PCS] emphasises, in line with much contemporary theology, that apostolicity belongs to the whole Church living in fidelity to the faith and mission of the apostles. Historic episcopal succession ... is one sign, an ‘effective’ sign, of the Church’s apostolicity. It belongs together with other signs, including that (relevant in the Nordic context) of the continuation of the historic sees of the Catholic Church. ... It is hard to see how we could have set out a ‘higher view’ of historic episcopal succession than this without resorting to some mechanistic, pipe-line theory of succession, which, as Fr. Yarnold himself states, ‘few theologians would now wish to defend’.¹⁰¹

Behind those contradictory opinions are the different evaluations of the Porvoo solution as possible or not, and a confusion about how the PCS should be understood.

4.3.5. The PCS as opening the way to presbyteral ordinations

One reaction to the PCS was that it now would be possible for the CoE to recognise the ordained ministry of the Methodist Church in England. It was thought that, since through the PD the CoE recognised the ordained ministries of the Churches of Denmark, Norway and Iceland, where there had been occasional presbyteral ordinations, this meant recognition of presbyteral ordination.¹⁰² In a way this interpretation of the PCS is similar to the criticisms we have already investigated. The difference is that the proponents of the CoE’s recognition of Methodist ministry valued the content of this interpretation differently. The one proponent for this view, Bishop Hugh Montefiore suggested that the CoE should recognise the Methodist ministry and ordain bishops for the Methodist church, based on the following argument:

⁹⁷ CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*, p33, §75.

⁹⁸ CoE, House of Bishops, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’, p13.

⁹⁹ Tustin, ‘Porvoo Principles’.

¹⁰⁰ Yarnold, ‘Porvoo Principles’.

¹⁰¹ Tustin, ‘Porvoo Principles’.

¹⁰² This was also the interpretation of Yarnold, ‘In Line with the Apostles’.

If we accept the clergy of the Danish, Norwegian and Icelandic Lutheran Churches as the equivalent of Anglican Priests, even though they have not been ordained with the outward sign of the apostolic succession, we should surely also accept existing Methodist ministers, especially as it has already been established that there is no substantial doctrinal difference between Anglicans and Methodists.¹⁰³

This interpretation was forcefully contradicted by other CoE representatives. In response to Bishop Montefiore, Bishop Tustin said that the PCS does not commit the CoE to:

...accept presbyteral ordinations. Indeed all of the Churches involved in the Conversations are episcopal Churches. Each Church is judged to have maintained an authentic apostolic succession and to have had transmitted to it an apostolic ministry, and has in fact maintained an orderly succession of episcopal ministry which has been focused in the consecration of bishops. ... The *Common Statement* argues that the Church of England can recognise the episcopate of national Churches which have continued the succession of bishops in the historic sees of the Catholic Church, but which at the time of the Reformation did so “by an occasional priestly/presbyteral ordination” and which intend to embrace the sign of historical episcopal succession with all of the Porvoo Churches for the future. The Porvoo recognition of *successio sedis* is well supported by evidence from the early Church and contemporary Orthodox thinking. None of this represents “a repudiation of the Catholic view of apostolic succession” as one of your correspondents suggests. The Church of England members of the Conversations could not possibly have endorsed any such repudiation.¹⁰⁴

The notion that all the Porvoo churches are episcopal was explained in an article by Hill. With reference to the full text of the PCS, including the essays in *Together in Mission and Ministry*, he argued that the occasional break of episcopal succession in Denmark:

...was not a case of rejecting the office of bishop; those ordained were already presbyters and were freshly ordained to something more. In addition, the presiding minister was himself exercising a wider than local ministry of an episcopal nature. After these initial ordinations only bishops have consecrated to the episcopate. Moreover, the ordination rites demonstrate the intention of these Churches to continue the episcopal office. As a matter of history the historic sees remained intact.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Montefiore, ‘Methodists Can Return’.

¹⁰⁴ Tustin, ‘Porvoo, the Methodists and Reunion’; Bp. Tustin makes the same point in reference to Yarnold, in Tustin, ‘Porvoo Principles’; See also; CoE, House of Bishops, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’, p14; Rowe, ‘Anglican-Methodist Reunion: Sir, - I Seem to Detect...’; Hind and Tustin, ‘Porvoo on the Apostolic Succession’; CoE, CCU, ‘Some Questions and Answers on “Porvoo”’, p2.

¹⁰⁵ Hill, ‘Anglican Ecumenists’ Two-Pronged Approach’.

It was also pointed out that the PD concerns only ministers who are episcopally ordained.¹⁰⁶

4.3.6. The concept and structure of unity

In the CoE's discussion, there was no disagreement about how the unity of the church should be understood. The disagreement was about how this unity should be accomplished. The unity of the church is understood as a visible unity of the church, as confessed in the creed. *Apostolicity and Succession* stated that "the acknowledgment of a common faith has consequences for the life, decision making and oversight of divided churches in short for the communion of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church in its mission to the world".¹⁰⁷ The House of Bishops stated that "the visible characteristics of the Church's unity – a common confession of the apostolic faith in word and life, the sharing of one baptism and one eucharist, the service of a single ministry and mutual accountability lived out through structures of communion – all these are characteristics [to] which Anglicans have long been committed (cf. the Lambeth Quadrilateral)".¹⁰⁸ It was noted that the PD commits the churches to a unity which is visible, which means "shared faith, shared life, shared oversight, common worship, common ministry, common mission, the establishment of joint structures for 'collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and order'".¹⁰⁹ It was noted that the unity described in the PCS will make the local church more aware of the catholicity of the Church of Christ, through the many contacts that will flow from it.

Based on the concept of visible unity spelled out in the PCS, there was, as has already been noted, a broad satisfaction in the CoE with the practical implications of the unity reached through Porvoo. It was stated that Porvoo created possibilities for a shared common mission in Northern Europe, to act and speak together in social and moral issues facing Europe today. Several speakers emphasised the opportunity to support "the fragile, emerging democracies of the Baltic States as they seek integration in the European scene".¹¹⁰

4.3.7. Potential for the CoE to learn from the Nordic churches

Closely related to the visible unity and the shared mission and ministry spelled out in the PCS is the mutual sharing of resources. In the CoE pro-

¹⁰⁶ Tustin, 'Porvoo, the Methodists and Reunion'.

¹⁰⁷ CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*, p5, 11f.

¹⁰⁸ CoE, House of Bishops, 'The Porvoo Agreement', p3.

¹⁰⁹ Bishop John Hind, speech, in; CoE, General Synod, 'General Synod 1995', p189; See also Hind, 'The Porvoo Agreement', p18; and *ibid*.

¹¹⁰ CoE, House of Bishops, 'The Porvoo Agreement', p2; See also CoE, General Synod, 'General Synod 1994'; CoE, General Synod, 'General Synod 1995'.

cess, it was striking how it was emphasised that the CoE could gain and learn from the Nordic churches through the unity obtained. The House of Bishops stated that it was because of the “anticipation of the gifts that the churches of the Nordic and Baltic countries will bring to our life and the greater credibility our unity will bring to our witness and mission” that they commended the PD to the General Synod.¹¹¹ It was noted that the practice of confirmation is different in the Nordic-Baltic churches, and that “this would reflect ancient and mediaeval practice, and accord with contemporary practice in the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, and episcopal Lutheran Churches, where confirmation by a priest is permissible, in some cases as a norm and in others as an exception”.¹¹² As has already been quoted in the treatment of their report, the House of Bishops looked forward to learning from the Nordic-Baltic churches “about their exercise and practice of episcopacy”.¹¹³ In particular, Canon Trevor Park pointed to the life of the CoN as an example from which to learn: their well-developed diaconate; the fact that they employ full-time catechists; and their well-developed catechetical material “streets ahead the material available” in the CoE. He noted that about 80-90% of the youth is confirmed in the CoN; that choir life is vibrant, especially among the youth; and the strong commitment to mission in the CoN.¹¹⁴ The Dean of Durham, John Arnold, emphasised the similarities of the Porvoo Churches in the field of liturgy and worship and in the exercise of episcopacy. In a commentary to those who were critical of the Porvoo solution, he pointed out that the clergy of the Nordic-Baltic churches “have a much higher minimum standard of education and theological formation and indeed the majority of this House of Clergy of which I am part and I think probably the House of Bishops would not qualify for ordination in any of these Churches at all. Do not confuse pedigree with competence.”¹¹⁵ In a lecture to a Swedish audience one year after the approval, the Anglican Church historian Colin Podmore noted that PD §58 *b(vii)* states that the churches commit themselves “to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry” and that “Norway, with its well-developed diaconate outside the threefold ministry and England, with its residual diaconate as a probationary year on the way to priesthood, need to move towards Sweden, with your proper and distinctive diaconate as part of the threefold ministry of the Church”.¹¹⁶ Podmore here touches upon something often foreseen in BEM, with consequences for the PCS. When BEM,¹¹⁷ and in turn the PCS,¹¹⁸ state

¹¹¹ CoE, House of Bishops, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’, p17.

¹¹² CoE, CCU, ‘General Synod 1993: A Report’, p10.

¹¹³ CoE, House of Bishops, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’, p4.

¹¹⁴ Speech by Canon Trevor Park, in CoE, General Synod, ‘General Synod 1995’, p198f, see also speech by the bishop of Carlisle Ian Harland, p202f.

¹¹⁵ Speech by John Arnold, in *ibid.*, p204f.

¹¹⁶ Podmore, ‘Porvoo: Text, Follow-up and Implications’, p8.

¹¹⁷ Faith & Order, ‘Lima Report: Baptism, Eucharist, Ministry (BEM), 1982’, §M22, p488.

¹¹⁸ PCS, §32j.

that “the threefold office of bishop, priest and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it”, this is a challenge to all the participating churches – not just to the churches that lack one or several of those parts of the one ministry. It is also a challenge to those churches that have, in one way or another, a threefold ministry, to find the way to an ordained ministry that is even more developed.

5. The Porvoo debate in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark

When the final text of the PCS was published in 1993, the Danish reception process was different from that of the other churches involved. In the other Porvoo churches, the PCS was handled by their official decision-making bodies. Since the *Danske Folkekirken* (the Danish Folk church) did not have any legally-regulated representative body of its own, the process of receiving the PCS was different. For this reason, and in order to have as broad support as possible from the people, the twelve bishops of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark (ELCD) chose to have the English text of the PCS translated and sent to all parish boards in their dioceses, asking them to consider it.¹ The bishops sent the PCS to the parishes in May 1994, and stated in their foreword to the Danish edition: “Herewith the bishops present the statement for open debate, and we ask for responses before Easter 1995; thereafter we will decide how to proceed.”² The bishops also asked four professors of church history and systematic theology to give their responses to the PCS and to a possible Danish approval of the agreement.³

The large-scale process initiated by the bishops was followed by an extensive debate in Denmark, in parishes, in meetings, and in the media. Altogether the Danish text of the PCS was sent to 2,116 parishes and 2,095 priests, and many responses were submitted by various organisations in the church, such as YMCA, YWCA, the Danish Diaconal Council, the Danish Missionary Society, Danish Santalmission, and the Ecumenical Centre in Aarhus.⁴ The debate in Denmark was more emotional and engaged more people than in the other Porvoo churches, where the process to adopt the statement was more straightforward.⁵ In the end, the Danish Folk Church did

¹ The 12 bishops are the ten ‘old’ bishops in Denmark and the two new bishops, i.e. the bishops of Faeroe Islands (1990) and of Greenland (1994).

² ELCD, the Bishops, ‘Forord’, pVII.

³ The four professors were Jacob Balling, church history and Peter Widmann, systematic theology, at Århus University; and Steffen Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, church history and Theodor Jørgensen, systematic theology, at the University of Copenhagen, Raahauge, *Fønix - Saer-nummer om Porvoo erklæringen*, 1995.

⁴ Lodberg, ‘The Danish “No” to Porvoo’, p77, 79; Lodberg, ‘Dansk kirkeforståelse og kirkens enhed’, p50; Lodberg, ‘Det folkekirkelige bispeembede’, p130.

⁵ The most important contributions to the Danish debate were collected and published in two volumes in 1995: ELCD, CIR, *Kompendium – Udvalg af offentliggjorte danske indlæg i*

not sign the PD in 1996, but asked for observer status in the communion. With the exception of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Latvia (ELCL), all ten of the other original twelve churches involved in the Porvoo debate decided to sign the agreement at that time and to establish the Porvoo Communion.⁶

Fourteen years later, the ELCD reconsidered its decision and approved the PD. In the meantime, in 2001 the ELCD also signed the Leuenberg Agreement without much debate. The process that led to the Danish signing of the PD in 2010 was different from the process in 1995. In contrast with the earlier process, the 2010 discussion was not public, but was held in the *Church of Denmark's Council on International Relations* (CIR) together with the bishops, but without much publicity. This time the decision to approve the PCS was taken by CIR and not by the bishops, on 9 December 2009.⁷

Because of this absence of public debate, and since the announcement “came as a surprise for most people”,⁸ the editors of the Danish theological journal *Fønix* decided to bring out a critical survey of the decision to approve the PCS. The publishers noted that:

The formal procedures have been followed, but there has been almost no publicity about it. Considering the great publicity and how vast the debate was around the same subject in 1995, which ended in a refusal to accept the agreement, you might wonder how the opposite decision was taken so quietly now, 15 years later. There has also been very little debate about the decision since it was taken, and most of it has been about the absence of publicity. Only a little has been written about the actual content.⁹

There is a tension between the first and second processes adopted by the ELCD: in its extent, in the way the decision was taken, and in its result. It is of interest, therefore, to ask why the process was different and what arguments finally convinced the Danish Church to sign the PD.

In the Danish Porvoo debate there are three different types of material, of which I will investigate two. First, there are the formal answers from the parish boards to the bishops in the submission for comment. Second, there is the informal debate about the PCS in journals and daily newspapers; and third, there are the official answers from the Bishops' Conference and from CIR, and some internal debate relating to those answers. Of those three, I intend to investigate the second and the third type of material, but not the

Porvoo-debatten. and in ELCD, CIR, *Supplementsbind til kompendium – Udvalg af offentliggjorte danske indlæg i Porvoo-debatten.*

⁶ In 1996 the Porvoo Communion consisted of the ELCLith, the EELC, the ELCF, the CoS, the CoN, the ELCI, the CoE, the CoW, the CoI, and the Scottish Episcopal Church.

⁷ ELCD, CIR, ‘Signaturforklaring ved underskrivelse af Porvoo Erklæringen’.

⁸ Thomsen and Laumhage Hansen, *Fønix - Tema: Porvoo-Erklæringen*, p74.

⁹ *Ibid.*

first. There are several reasons for this: 1. My primary intention is not to describe the Danish Porvoo debate but to discern important arguments for or against the PCS and the ecclesiologies lying behind this critique. 2. For this reason, it is likely that an analysis of the parishes' answers would not further add any important information to my investigation. Both the bishops' answer in 1995 and various general characteristics of the Danish Porvoo debate indicate that the arguments in the general debate mirror the arguments in the parishes' responses,¹⁰ especially since many of the debaters were priests who were co-responsible, or in practice fully responsible, for the parishes' answers. The Danish theologian Peter Lodberg has investigated the parishes' answers in the diocese of Århus, and has confirmed this.¹¹ My selection of material from the Danish Porvoo debate is thus fully sufficient for my purpose. I will investigate official documents from the bishops and CIR, the critique of those documents, two special editions of *Fønix* from 1995 and 2010, and articles published in journals and daily newspapers.

I will start with an overview of the ecclesiological and constitutional situation in the ELCD, since this greatly affected how the PCS was received and the debate that followed. Thereafter I will thematically present the Danish Porvoo debate, which will be followed by a presentation and analysis of the formal motivations for the Danish *no* and later *yes* to the PD.

5.1. General characteristic of the ELCD

To describe and characterise the ELCD is not an easy task, as the ELCD often puzzles observers from abroad.¹² ELCD is a church searching for its identity, and it is often stated that it does not have any ecclesiology or is a "Christianity without a church",¹³ which in itself is a contradiction. As a consequence of this ambiguity, the theological and church law discussion is impressively extensive in Denmark, and more wide-ranging than those in all

¹⁰ Fledelius, 'Kirkekampen i Danmark', p155; Fledelius, 'Debatten om Porvoo', p73f; Fledelius, 'Porvoo – ja eller nej', p15ff; Jørgensen, 'Porvoo er et praktisk dokument', p55; Jørgensen, 'Om at læse Porvoo', p107; Langhoff, 'Saglighed udbedes', p53; Langdahl, 'Porvoo opmuntrende og inspirerende – de danske såkaldt kirkelige retninger har idag fået et sekterisk præg', p89; Gregersen, 'Fra Luther over Grundvig till Porvoo', p91; Norman Svendsen, 'Provokationen fra Porvoo', p103; Moesgård-Nielsen, 'Porvoo understreger det almindelige præstedømme', p109; Lilleør, 'Biskoppelig beton Hvad betyder høringsfasen om Porvoo', p121; Bruun Hjöllund, 'Ked af den dogmatiske sikkerhed', p125; Allchin, 'En anglikansk replik til', p129; Rønnøw, 'Porvoo – så man kan forstå det!', p135; Bjerager, 'Ja til Porvoo', p141; Dybdal, 'Stop Porvoo-motstandens endløse henvisning till Luther', p147.

¹¹ Lodberg, 'Dansk kirkeforståelse og kirkens enhed', p49f; Lodberg, 'Det folkekirkelige bispeembede', p132; Lodberg, 'The Danish "No" to Porvoo', p77ff.

¹² Roelvink, 'Book review: Gudsfolket i Danmark'; Brodd, 'Dansk ekklesiologi under 1990-talet'; Bollman, 'Folkekirken', p28; Wiberg Pedersen, 'Hvarfor er økumenik så svær i Danmark?', p269.

¹³ Raun Iversen, 'Den kirkeløse kristendom i Danmark', p13ff.

the other Nordic and Baltic churches. The discussion is distinctive in that it is internal to Denmark, and – at least in respect of ecclesiology – shows few international influences.¹⁴ Traditionally, Denmark is culturally closer to the German theological and philosophical tradition than to the Anglo-Saxon.¹⁵ Despite an extensive theological discussion, the church law discussion in Denmark has little or no explicit relation to ecclesiological considerations, but is based on the state church system and its administrative tradition. The church is seen as more invisible than visible, and church law is seen as an entity that is unrelated to theology.¹⁶ The church law discussion in the ELCD intensified in 1983 as a result of a conflict between one of the bishops and the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, who wanted to reprimand a diocesan priest for her political sermon. The bishop, however, defended the priest. Through this, the need for a more fully-elaborated reflection on church law became obvious, and in the aftermath, the *Selskab for Kirkeret* (Society for Church Law) was instituted in 1986.¹⁷ Due to this development – as well as other factors, such as decreasing knowledge of the Christian faith in the people, and a more multicultural society – there is a growing awareness of the need for deeper ecclesiological reflection in Denmark. But there are also many parties in the church that resist such reflection, describing it as incompatible with the tradition of the ELCD.

In the 4th article of the Danish constitution, formulated in 1849 and confirmed in 1953, the Danish church is described thus: “The Evangelic-Lutheran Church is the Danish Folk Church and as such is supported by the state”. Three aspects of this wording are crucial for an understanding of the ELCD; first, it confesses itself to be Evangelic-Lutheran. Second, it is nationalistically Danish, and confesses itself to be the Danish Folk Church. The understanding of the ELCD as a Folk Church was formulated for the first time in the 1849 constitution, and is based on a romantic idea that goes back to Friedrich Schleiermacher.¹⁸ The fact that the church is regulated in Denmark’s secular constitution leads to the third characteristic: the close connection between church and state in Denmark. A fourth important feature for understanding the ELCD, not mentioned in the quotation above, is its various revival movements during the 19th century and their influence on the common understanding of Christian life and church.

Both theologically and legally, the 19th century pietistic movements, as well as the nationalistic romanticism and its vision of people, church and

¹⁴ Vium Mikkelsen, ‘Den Danske Folkekirkens deltagelse i Leuenberg’, p45.

¹⁵ An indication of this is that there are few international references other than German ones in the Danish theological literature. Cf. Jørgensen, ‘Porvoo er et praktisk dokument’, p55.

¹⁶ Cf. Ishøj, ‘Kirken er i afgørende forstand usynlig’, p62; Aagaard, *Identifikation af kirken*, p101.

¹⁷ Christoffersen, *Kirkeret mellem stat, marked og civilsamfund*, p16; Gadegaard, ‘Udviklingen i forholdet mellem kirke og stat’, p234.

¹⁸ Aagaard, *Identifikation af kirken*, p124ff; Lodberg, ‘The Nordic Churches and the Ecumenical Movement’, p145.

nation, are crucial for the understanding of the ELCD. This has led not only to a close connection but also to a confusion between church and nation. When the writings of Grundtvig, the most influential Danish 19th century theologian, were received in the Danish church and society, ‘belonging to the nation’ took priority over ‘religious belonging to the church’.¹⁹ This has also affected the theological use of Luther and the understanding of the ELCD as Evangelic-Lutheran, or sometimes even Lutheran-Evangelic.²⁰ The Folk Church is understood as part of the national identity, rather than as part of worldwide Christendom.²¹ The Danish theologian Kaj Bollman has called attention to the fact that the ELCD is not the only church with a close connection to the national identity of its country. The same can be said, for example, about the Polish Roman Catholic Church. There is a difference, however, in that the ELCD is integrated into the Danish state, while the Polish RCC is independent of the state, and is part of a worldwide communion; and, as such, it can be critical towards the state.²²

There is a great sensitivity in Denmark, and on the part of its politicians, about any tendency to the political involvement of the church.²³ There are few attempts to read Luther against the ELCD or to go behind the Reformation or even the Danish constitution of 1849. Rather, Luther is used in a repetitive and a normative sense, while the international ecumenical and ecclesiological discussion of the 20th century seems to play a very modest role in the Danish context. The Danish theologian Peter Lodberg describes the ecclesiology of the ELCD:

It is often contended that the Folk Church does not have any ecclesiology. That does not make sense. It has a minimalist ecclesiology that has its background in the free-churchly tendencies of revivalism. The revival movements, both the *Inner mission*, the *Grundtvigian movement* – and for that matter the Baptist movement – emphasise as few and minimal ecclesiological structures as possible. ... There is thus in the free-church tradition a strong emphasis on the spiritual and free spirit of the church and its unity. The unity of the church is in this sense invisible and spiritual.

The visible church – if you can speak at all about such a thing – appears only in the local congregation. Here the believers live in a voluntarily chosen community, and the local congregation [*sognemenigheden*] becomes – theologically speaking – the manifestation of the body of Jesus Christ par excellence, and therefore each local congregation has its own autonomy. The structures that bind those local congregations together are not church in a real sense in the free-church tradition. In the Baptism movement one speaks about ‘alliance’, ‘society’ or ‘federation’. In the Folk Church the free-churchly tra-

¹⁹ Chase, ‘Gudsfolket - hvem er med?’, p89; Bollman, ‘Folkekirken’, p28; Allchin, ‘Folk and Folkeleghed’, p15.

²⁰ Wiberg Pedersen, ‘Folkekirken’, p11.

²¹ Bollman, ‘Folkekirken’, p35ff; Vium Mikkelsen, ‘Den Danske Folkekirkens deltagelse i Leuenberg’, p45.

²² Bollman, ‘Folkekirken’, p37.

²³ Cf. Nilsson, ‘Det mellemkirkelige Råd’, p193.

dition opposes every attempt, for example, to accord any theological importance to the doctrinal and authoritative function of the episcopal office. ... In the Folk Church context it is this spiritualised and invisible ecclesiology that is today the Danish ecclesiology. ... It contains a certain understanding of the church's unity, which is invisible since the church is only invisible. The question is: what will happen when the invisible church no longer has the structures of the national state to uphold it? Will it disappear, or create its own structures?²⁴

The distinction between *visible* and *invisible* is common in the Danish ecclesiological debate. It fits well into a pietistic and idealistic understanding of the church as merely a practical framework for the faith of the individual. This is a heritage of the 19th century pietistic and liberal answers to modernism with ecclesiological consequences,²⁵ easily combined with a modernistic individualism motivated through an emphasis on the common priesthood. According to this kind of ecclesiology, the constitution or structure of the church is only something outward and extra, and is non-essential, since what is important and true is the invisible church. This is said at the same time that the real and structural feature of the ELCD is in fact the state, although this is not recognised. An example of the ELCD's ecclesiological dependence on the State and the confusion between church and state is the relationship between the Danish state and the semi-autonomous provinces of Greenland and the Faeroe Islands. As a necessary consequence of the state-church system, in the same way the churches of those territories are regarded as semi-autonomous. However, while the church of Greenland has interpreted this as still being a part of the ELCD, the diocese of the Faeroe Islands has interpreted it as their not being part of it.²⁶

Since the constitutional situation in the ELCD has critical importance for the Danish Porvoo debate, I will describe this much-debated issue in the ELCD.

5.2. The Constitution of the ELCD

Preconditions for the Danish Reformation were the decay of the episcopate and the control the Danish king had over the Danish church province in pre-Reformation times, which restricted the autonomy of the Archbishop of

²⁴ Lodberg, 'Dansk kirkeforståelse og kirkens enhed', p57f. The Grundtvigian movement is a movement in the ELCD going back to the priest and theologian Nikolaj Frederik Severin Grundtvig 1783-1872, who was and still is hugely influential in Denmark.

²⁵ Cf. Pannenberg, *Christian Spirituality and Sacramental Community*, p31ff.; Tjørhom, *Visible Church, Visible Unity*, p39.

²⁶ *Danish Law nr. 578, 24-06-2006* and *Danish Law nr 473, 12-06-2009*.

Lund.²⁷ After 1519, and during the entire Reformation era, the ‘Archbishops’ of the Danish Church province were neither ordained bishops nor formally approved by Rome, and from 1532 another three episcopal sees were occupied by persons who were not ordained bishops. In practice, King Kristian II appointed and dismissed both the Archbishop and several other bishops as he wished, and the episcopal-sacramental responsibilities of those dioceses had to be exercised by special ‘ordination bishops’, while the nominal ‘bishops’ took care of the church’s secular affairs. At the time of the Danish Reformation, all bishops were in prison for their political involvement, and the dioceses were without bishops who could ordain and supervise. In order to solve the irregular ecclesial situation, King Kristian III turned to Wittenberg, and its superintendent Johannes Bugenhagen was sent. In 1537, Bugenhagen ordained seven superintendents or bishops for the mediaeval Danish dioceses, and a new constitution for the church and state was formulated. Since Bugenhagen himself was not ordained by bishops, this has in the ecumenical dialogues been considered as a break with episcopal succession in the Danish church province. The breach can be understood as a result of the political ambition of the king to be autonomous in relation to the emperor and the Pope, as well as of the contempt of the Danish pre-Reformation ‘bishops’ for their own office. In the new constitution, the state was governed without any interference from the church, and the king was responsible to God. The church was regarded as being engaged only with proclamation and, in reality, the king became the highest authority of the church.²⁸ Unlike many German princes, the king of Denmark has never been defined as *summus episcopus*; but the authority of the king in religious matters since the Reformation has been derived from the king’s authority as the ruler of the state.²⁹

The current state-church system is based on the constitution of 1849, which changed the relationship between church and state. In principle, the intention in 1849 was to make a distinction between church and state, and to give the church independence in its internal affairs through the establishment of a church constitution. The church should no longer be an integral part of the state and, according to the fourth paragraph of the Danish constitution, the church – here called *den Danske folkekirken* (the Danish Folk Church) – should be supported by the state – a wording that, in itself, requires the church to be something distinct from the state. In reality, the constitutional power was given to the king and the parliament, but this was only meant to be a temporary arrangement. The intention instead was to create a church order where the church was governed by a church council or a synod. De-

²⁷ The Archbishop’s see in the mediaeval Danish church province was Lund – today a Bishop’s see in the CoS. Formally the ELCD does not have any archbishop, but a primate who resides in Copenhagen.

²⁸ Bach-Nielsen and Schjørring, *Kirkens historie*, 2:p108; Pedersen, ‘Episcopacy in Our Churches: Denmark’, p85ff; Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p80ff.

²⁹ Espersen, *Folkekirken styrelse*, 35.

spite many attempts, this has never been accomplished. As a result, the ELCD has no legal body with the competence to speak on behalf of the church.³⁰

In the Danish context it is possible to discern several different descriptions of the Church's order, all relating to the state-church relationship in Denmark, but with various emphases, and mirroring an ambiguity of the organisation. This is not surprising, since the intention of the Danish constitution of 1849 to create a constitution for the ELCD has not been realised. The head of the Ministry of Ecclesiastical Affairs, Preben Espersen, consequently notes, in his 1990 discussion of the governance of the ELCD, that it has "not been possible to exhaustively describe the administration of the Folk Church, and in some cases the conclusions of the discussion are associated with more or less uncertainty."³¹ The Danish Church historian Hal Koch, highly influential in Denmark, once described the order of the ELCD as a *well-ordered anarchy*,³² a remark referred to by several of the debaters in the Porvoo debate, and also seen as an ideal well worth preserving.³³ As a consequence of the ambiguous constitutional situation, the ELCD often tends to be defined in negative rather than positive terms.³⁴ The Danish historian Karsten Fledelius does this in an article about the Danish Porvoo debate:

For who decides in the Danish Folk Church – a church that is neither a state church (where the government decides) nor a episcopal church [*bispekirke*] (where the bishops decide) nor a synodical church (where a church synod or church council decides)? This question has never been resolved, since it has never been possible to reach consensus about this in the church, or between the people of the church and the politicians. And therefore they have let it continue with a far-reaching democracy on the parish level.³⁵

This description echoes the negative definition in Espersen's *Kirkeret* ('church law') from 1993, which states that the Folk Church is *not*: 1. A state church in the pre-constitutional meaning (i.e. as it was before the constitution of Denmark of 1849); 2. An episcopal church, where the bishops consti-

³⁰ Rasmussen, *Forholdet Mellem Kirke Og Stat i Danmark*, p9, 23f, 26ff; Bach-Nielsen and Schjørring, *Kirkens historie*, 2:p461f., 567ff; Westergaard Madsen, 'The Relationship of State and Church in Denmark', p61. Rasmussen points out that the common claim among Danish church historians during the 20th century that the intention of the Danish constitution of 1849 was to separate church and state is not accurate. The intention was to create a church order that would give the church freedom in the state-church system, supported by the state. This seems to be an accurate comment.

³¹ Espersen, *Folkekirkens styrelse*, p12.

³² The expression goes back to the Danish church historian Hal Koch, highly influential in Denmark, who coined the phrase for the first time in Koch, 'Den danske Folkekirke', p148.

³³ Kallesøe, 'En kirke til salg?', p32; Langhoff, 'Folkekirken er ikke handlingslammet', p149; Brinth, 'Til Porvoo – fra Freerslev', p133; Morville Schrøder, 'Porvoo-erklæring en luftig parentes', p23.

³⁴ Wiberg Pedersen, 'Folkekirken', p24.

³⁵ Fledelius, 'Kirkekampen i Danmark', p155.

tute the church's law; or 3. A society or a juridical association.³⁶ These three notions are all true from a legal perspective, but they can all be questioned and nuanced. To say that the ELCD is not a state church is only possible if it is defined in a restricted way, where the state takes all decisions on behalf of the church; that is not the case in Denmark, and it is not legally possible. The state cannot, for example, change the confession of the church. Espersen states in *Folkekirkens styrelse* ('The Governance of the Folk Church') that:

There is no doubt that the highest decision-making body in the Folk church is the Parliament and the Government. The question is only whether there are some limitations in these bodies' competence or, in other words, whether in the framework of the Folk church there are 'internal affairs' where the competence belongs exclusively to spiritual agencies, which in practice would first and foremost be the individual bishop.³⁷

It might be difficult not to define the ELCD as a state church, which it clearly is, where its legislation, economy, and even its mandate go back to the state in the person of the Monarch and parliament, and it is administered by the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs.³⁸ The relationship between the state and the church in Denmark has been referred to as an expression of the 17th century juridical principle of *ius in sacris et ius circa sacra*.³⁹ The principle indicates that the state was responsible for the church's external features – its laws, finances, and organisation – while the church was responsible for the internal affairs of the church – its liturgy, ecclesiastical books, and inner spiritual life. Often those features also related to the responsibility of the state, since the church's liturgical and juridical books were established by the king.⁴⁰ At the same time this description points to an ambiguity about competence, and therefore the ELCD might well be described – in contrast to Fledelius' and Espersen's descriptions above – as an episcopal state church with congregational features, often motivated with reference to the common priesthood of all believers.⁴¹ Since the ELCD does not have a decision-making body, the responsibility for true doctrine lies with the bishops, as stated in CA 28. In practice – at least when it comes to the church's internal affairs – the Danish bishops have more authority than many bishops in

³⁶ Espersen, *Kirkeret*, p55ff.

³⁷ Espersen, *Folkekirkens styrelse*, p25.

³⁸ Cf. Espersen, *Kirkeret*, p58; Harbsmeier and Raun Iversen, *Praktisk teologi*, p40ff; Vejrup Nielsen and Wiberg Pedersen, 'Exploring a Heritage', p11.

³⁹ Cf. Rasmussen, *Forholdet Mellem Kirke Og Stat i Danmark*; Christoffersen, *Kirkeret mellem stat, marked og civilsamfund*; Espersen, *Folkekirkens styrelse*; Espersen, *Kirkeret*, p56.

⁴⁰ Brohed, 'Kyrka - Statfrågan och de politiska partierna', p163.

⁴¹ In the Porvoo debate it was a common argument that no-one could sign the PD on behalf of ELCD. Cf. Stolt, 'Porvoo-processen mv.', p43; Andersen, 'Vi har ingen, der tegner firmaet', p19; Dam, 'Folkekirken har intet organ, der kan sige ja eller nej til Porvoo', p145.

churches that are independent of the state.⁴² The Danish state has constantly opposed the development of a synodical structure or of any juridical subject with legal capacity in the ELCD.⁴³ The reason for this is obvious. As long as the ELCD does not have a formally-constituted Bishops' Conference or synod, the state will have sovereign control over the church. In line with this, it should be observed that the word *individual* in the quotation above by Espersen is not neutral. The word is a clear marking of the fact that the bishops do not constitute a formal decision-making body, but that they formally exercise episcopal power only as individuals, not as a collective. The bishops in the ELCD meet – sometimes disparagingly referred to as ‘the bishops’ tea party’⁴⁴ – but they are not a constitutional Bishops' Conference and “cannot appear as a collegial body with any legal validity”.⁴⁵ Espersen consequently notes “that the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs shall not be regarded as without competence in ‘inner churchly matters’”,⁴⁶ (i.e. *in sacris*) and this confirms the church's subordination to the state.⁴⁷ The difficulty with defining the respective competencies for decision-making has led to several controversies between the bishops and the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs, where the Minister has tried to correct or even altered decisions made by bishops. This has happened in cases related to controversial sermons, or priests promoting heresies such as reincarnation,⁴⁸ or in relation to church finance. The difficulties are further complicated by the fact that the clergy of the ELCD are employed and paid by the state.⁴⁹

The difficulty was also obvious in the Porvoo debate where, for example, the Church Minister's department head Preben Espersen stated that, since the ELCD does not have any synod, the responsibility to decide whether the ELCD should sign the PCS or not belonged to the parliament. The bishop of Copenhagen, Erik Norman Svendsen, did not agree with him and stated that, of course, the members of parliament were welcome to participate in the referral process like everyone else, but he assumed that the parliament would not rework the bishops' evaluation of the PCS.⁵⁰ This discussion was also related to the character of the PCS and its consequences for the ELCD. Was it to be regarded as a doctrinal or legal decision, or both, with consequences for who had competence for decision-making? In his claim, Espersen contradicts his own description of the ELCD as “not a state church in the pre-

⁴² This is noted, for example, by Allchin, ‘En anglikansk replik til’, p129; see also Hyldegaard-Hansen, ‘Bispeembedet i folkekirken’, p86ff.

⁴³ Cf. Espersen, *Folkekirkens styrelse*, p128; Nilsson, ‘Det mellemkirkelige Råd’, p193, 196.

⁴⁴ Rønn Hornbech, ‘Replik fra en lovgiver’, p58.

⁴⁵ Espersen, *Folkekirkens styrelse*, p34.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p37.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Cf. Christoffersen, *Kirkeret mellem stat, marked og civilsamfund*, p16f; Nilsson, ‘Det mellemkirkelige Råd’, p199f.

⁴⁹ Gadegaard, ‘Udviklingen i forholdet mellem kirke og stat’, p230f, 234.

⁵⁰ Christensen and Kragelund, ‘Biskopen vil vurdere Porvoo-erklæringen’, p2.

constitutional meaning”, i.e. before the constitution of 1849. Rather, his claim is in line with the despotic state church before 1849 where the bishops, in practice, were given space to act only as long as the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs permitted it.

Because of the lack of a legal body with competence to decide, and the ambiguous shared responsibility between church and state, in combination with a pietistic emphasis on the common priesthood – often in opposition to the ordained ministry – the stress has been, for practical reasons, on the parish as that part of the structure that must at least function.⁵¹ This is what Fledelius describes as “a far-reaching democracy on the parish-level”. As we have seen, this does not mean that the parishioners or their priests or bishops are given any legal competence for decision-making beyond the parish, or, in the case of the bishops, outside their dioceses.

That the bishops are supposed to act only individually may be true from a constitutional perspective, since the law makes no provision for the Bishops' Conference to function as a decision-making body. Nevertheless, in reality the bishops as a corporate body have played a crucial role in the history of the ELCD. Several times they have taken decisions on behalf of the church, which, for the first time since the Reformation, has laid the foundation for a formal decision-making body in the ELCD: the *ELCD's Council on International Relations* (CIR). It was in relation to the ecumenical movement that the need for a formal decision-making body for the ELCD became obvious; but it would take about half a century of development and church political processes to reach the point where the bishops clearly acted as the officials responsible for the ELCD on the basis of their teaching authority.

It is noteworthy in Nordic church history that all the Nordic churches participated actively in the organisation and rise of the international ecumenical organisations. This was also the case with the ELCD. With its ecumenical history during the 20th century, one might ask what caused the ELCD to become a more inward-looking and ecumenically restrictive church, as the examples of the decisions not to take up membership of the Leuenberg Fellowship in 1973 and the Porvoo Communion in 1995 demonstrate. In contrast with those negative processes, the ELCD became a member of the *Nordic Ecumenical Institute* in 1939 (NEI), the *Lutheran World Federation* (LWF) in 1948, the *World Council of Churches* (WCC) in 1948, and the *Conference of European Churches* (CEC) in 1959. The decisions on behalf of the ELCD were taken by the bishops in all of those cases, and afterwards the church minister gave a financial contribution to the ELCD for its ecumenical participation.⁵² Following the pattern in all the Nordic countries, the emergence of an ecumenical organ in the ELCD started as an informal council to help the bishops in their ecumenical engagement in the international

⁵¹ Cf. Harbsmeier and Raun Iversen, *Praktisk teologi*, p39.

⁵² Lodberg, ‘Den danske folkekirke og det økumeniske samarbejde’, p399ff.

ambition to rebuild Europe after World War II. *Det Økumeniske Fællesråd* (The Ecumenical Council), founded in 1939 with Bishop Fuglesang-Damgaard as chairman, functioned as the contact organisation for the ELCD's engagement in several international ecumenical organisations.⁵³ Since the Ecumenical Council also had members from churches other than ELCD, *Det Mellemkirkelige Råd* (The Interchurch Council) was founded in 1954 by the Danish bishops to deal with the ELCD's ecumenical relations together with the ELCD's bishops who were members of the Council.⁵⁴ In 1989 the council was transformed into the *Church of Denmark's Council on International Relations* (CIR) by the Danish government as an experimental structure, and made permanent in 1994.⁵⁵

Two things may be noticed about this development. First, it is through the ELCD's ecumenical relations that the need for a legal body with the competence to make decisions on behalf of the ELCD became urgent. Secondly, bearing this history from the 1930s to the 1960s in mind, it is surprising that in the 1970s the bishops did not act in the same way as their predecessors, but took a different stand. In 1972, the bishops of the ELCD said *no* to membership in the Leuenberg Fellowship, with the declaration that no-one could take such a decision on behalf of the ELCD.⁵⁶ It is noteworthy that the bishops' declaration in 1972 is in sharp contrast with earlier decisions made by the bishops on behalf of the Danish church concerning the NEI, WCC, LWF, and CEC.⁵⁷ A similar but lesser hesitation due to constitutional confusion can be observed in the Danish Porvoo debate. An exception is the ELCD's response to BEM, written by four university professors and approved by the bishops.⁵⁸ However, this was a theoretical response without any requirements for change or for affiliation to any federation or communion, and it was thus easier to respond to.

The question is, Why did the Danish bishops of the 1970s and 1980s hesitate in a way that they had not done earlier? It is likely that this development was due to the strong influence of the Social Democratic Party from the mid-1930s onwards.⁵⁹ During this time the character of the ELCD as a state church was in fact enforced, since the Social Democratic Party changed their church policy in 1937 and wanted the church to remain a part of the welfare

⁵³ Bishop Fuglesang-Damgaard, Bishop of Copenhagen from 1934-1961, named by the Danish newspaper *Kristeligt Dagblad* as one of the most important bishops in Danish church history; Jensen, 'Historiens 10 mest markante biskopper'.

⁵⁴ Lodberg, 'Den danske folkekirke og det økumeniske samarbejde', p403ff.

⁵⁵ Nilsson, 'Det mellemkirkelige Råd', 189ff; ELCD, CIR, 'Mellemkirkelige Råds historie'; Lodberg, 'Den danske folkekirke og det økumeniske samarbejde', p406ff.

⁵⁶ Lodberg, 'Det folkekirkelige bispeembede', p128; Lodberg, 'The Danish "No" to Porvoo', p85.

⁵⁷ Lodberg, 'Den danske folkekirke og det økumeniske samarbejde', p399ff; Lodberg, 'Det folkekirkelige bispeembede', p127f.

⁵⁸ ELCD, the Bishops Conference, 'Response to BEM by ELCD', p106ff.

⁵⁹ Stenbæk, 'Danmark: Folkekirken og de politiske partier efter 2. Verdenskrig', 228ff.

system. Another important factor was the Social Democratic Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs in the years 1953-1966, Bodil Koch. Koch, herself a theologian and married to church historian Hal Koch, understood the church as a spiritual entity, living from the proclamation of the word, with different shapes in different times, and after 1849 as a purely civil institution.⁶⁰ Because of this, the whole discussion about structural and economic reform in the ELCD took place in the Folk Church system without questions being raised about it. For example, it was not necessary for the church to have its own financial system, since it could be taken over by the state, as in the case of the cost of the clergy stipends. Parliamentary church policy in the post-war period was implemented with substantial political unity.⁶¹ At the 150-year jubilee of the Danish constitution in 1999, there was no political wish to change the state-church system.⁶² The situation is the same today, even though there is an on-going political process in the Danish parliament to give the ELCD a legally-formulated administration integrated with the state church system,⁶³ but also a nascent discussion about the plausibility of the present state-church system.⁶⁴

The often-repeated notion in the ELCD that no-one has the competence to make decisions may be true from a constitutional perspective; at least it was so until 1989, when the CIR was instituted. But even without the CIR, it is possible to see the bishops as representatives of the ELCD, considering their actions until 1970. It is also noteworthy that the original intention of the Danish constitution in 1849 was to distinguish church and state and to create a church order in the ELCD – something that has not yet been achieved in the ELCD, with the possible exception of the CIR.

5.3. The decision process of the ELCD, 1995-2009

The constitutional ambiguity in the ELCD was one important reason that the Danish Porvoo debate was so heated. Many who participated in the debate emphasised that no-one in the ELCD could make the decision, while others argued for different decision-makers than the bishops,⁶⁵ the Minister of Ec-

⁶⁰ Cf. Koch, 'Den danske Folkekirke', 138ff. Koch argues forcefully for the church to be understood as a civil institution and "well-ordered anarchy", giving the priests the greatest freedom to preach – something uniquely Danish, and probably not found in other countries.

⁶¹ Bach-Nielsen and Schjørring, *Kirkens historie*, 2:p710ff; Lodberg, 'The Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark, 1940-2000', p22.

⁶² Brohed, 'Kyrka-Statfrågan och de politiska partierna', p164f, 171; Stenbæck, 'Danmark: Folkekirken og de politiske partier efter 2. Verdenskrig', p234.

⁶³ Sørensen, 'Kirkeministern: Syndigt vrøvl om skilsmisse mellem stat og kirke'; Stender og Kjærsgaard, 'Lad os alle rode - længe leve folkekirken'; Lodberg, 'The Nordic Churches and the Ecumenical Movement', p146.

⁶⁴ See Gadegaard, 'Udviklingen i forholdet mellem kirke og stat', p230.

⁶⁵ Langhoff, 'Folkekirken er ikke handlingslammet'.

clesiastical Affairs, or parliament.⁶⁶ The constitutional discussion is noteworthy, since the ELCD actually had a formal representative body for ecumenical issues at that time: the newly-instituted CIR. The status of the CIR and of the operating procedure seems nevertheless to have been unclear in the years of the Porvoo debate (1992-1995). The CIR also seems to have been busy constituting itself as an official body of the ELCD.⁶⁷ The Danish edition of the PCS was published in 1994 with a foreword signed by all twelve bishops of the ELCD. There is no reference to any involvement of the CIR in the submission for comment, except that its name and address appear on the front page, and it is stated that more copies could be obtained from the diocesan offices or from the secretariat of the CIR. It is also clearly stated in the text that it was the bishops who sent the agreement for consideration, without any reference to the CIR. At this stage in the Danish Porvoo debate there is no reference to the CIR as a body responsible for decisions, and the respective competencies of the bishops and the CIR were only defined later. The role of the CIR was purely administrative at the request of the bishops. The presiding bishop of Copenhagen was also regarded as having a special ecumenical responsibility.⁶⁸

Considering the great interest in the constitutional question, there were surprisingly few in the discussion who suggested the CIR as a possible decision-making body, while many questioned the bishops' right to make the decision. An argument for the decision being taken by the CIR was that, in contrast to the bishops, it was regarded as a democratically-elected board in the ELCD.⁶⁹ The CIR consists of members elected from the ten dioceses of the Danish mainland, one from the Church of Greenland (but no representative from the Church of the Faeroe Islands), and two bishops appointed by

⁶⁶ Christensen and Kragelund, 'Biskopen vil vurdere Porvoo-erklæringen', p2; Thomsen, 'Hvad star det i Porvooerklæringen?', p8; Klinting, 'Folkekirken offentlighedskultur', p36; Stolt, 'Porvoo-processen mv.', p44; Rønn Hornbech, 'Replik fra en lovgiver', p56; Pedersen, 'Porvoo og de kvindelige præster', p61; Fledelius, 'Porvoo – ja eller nej', p15-17; Andersen, 'Vi har ingen, der tegner firmaet', p19; Kallesøe, 'En kirke til salg?', p29; Klinting, 'Når Porvoo-debatten skal konkluderes', p69; Gregersen, 'Fra Luther over Grundvig til Porvoo', p91; Damgaard Nielsen, 'Folkekirken är tålsom', p101; Jørgensen, 'Om at læse Porvoo', p107; Stenbæk, 'Porvoo-dokumenterne, biskopperne og retten', p116ff; Willessen, 'Porvoo-erklæringen som politisk dokument', p137f; Nøjgaard, 'Porvoo-dokumentets forførelse', p139; Dam, 'Folkekirken har intet organ, der kan sige ja eller nej til Porvoo', p143.

⁶⁷ Nilsson, 'Det mellemkirkelige Råd', p195f; Schall Holberg, 'Det første år med MKR', p203ff; Christoffersen, 'Folkekirken og Porvoo – retligt set', p129ff.

⁶⁸ Lodberg, 'Det folkekirkelige bispeembede', p131; Norman Svendsen, 'Angående Porvoo-processen i Danmark'. "Når det dengang var biskopperne, der førte forhandlingerne, skyldes, at Det Mellemkirkelige Råd i sin nuværende skikkelse som officielt organ for folkekirken endnu ikke var etableret. Det var også biskopperne, der i sin tid sendte Porvooerklæringen ud til drøftelse i de danske menigheder. Som bekendt endte denne høring med, at biskopperne måtte sige nej til at underskrive Porvoo-erklæringen i 1996."

⁶⁹ Lodberg, 'Den danske folkekirke og det økumeniske samarbejde', p407; Nilsson, 'Det mellemkirkelige Råd', p193, 196; Gadegaard, 'Udviklingen i forholdet mellem kirke og stat', p232; Stolt, 'Porvoo-processen mv.', p43.

the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs.⁷⁰ The mandate to make decisions about ecumenical agreements is given to the CIR by the Minister, and not by the church itself. It is also clearly legally stated by the state that “the Council on International Relations does not have a synodical character, and thus has no competence to make statements on dogmatics or church political matters. In meetings and conferences the participants only express their own stand-points.”⁷¹

Since 2001 there has been an agreement between the bishops and the CIR that the bishops, as those responsible for teaching, express their doctrinal viewpoints and that the CIR makes the decisions. This shared and divided responsibility is different from the 1995 process, despite the fact that the CIR was formally made permanent in 1994. The agreement is not legally regulated, but was taken by the bishops and CIR together.⁷² There is also an overlap between the bishops and the CIR, since there are always at least two bishops among the CIR’s members. In this sense, the bishops’ teaching authority is in some sense preserved whilst the ELCD – for the first time since the Reformation – has a legal decision-making body.

The constitutional development described here is confirmed in an article from 2010 by the Bishop of Viborg, Karsten Nissen, who says of the expanded authority of the CIR: “since 1995 there is also a formal change, in that it is no longer the bishops alone who take a stand on those [ecumenical] questions. There is an agreement between the bishops and the CIR, which means that the bishops should express themselves about doctrinal aspects, while the CIR should decide whether the Folk Church should join or not.”⁷³ The statement by Nissen seems, in a constitutional sense, to be exaggerated, since before the agreement between the bishops and the CIR, the bishops did not actually have this formal ability to decide alone, as claimed. But in practice the bishops have emphasised their right to speak with doctrinal authority on behalf of the ELCD, and before the 1970s they took decisions with ecumenical consequences for the ELCD. At the time when the PCS was discussed, the bishops’ right to act on behalf of the church was more delicate, and the bishops solved it through the submission for comment as a basis for their decision on behalf of the ELCD. The sensitivity of the bishops’ acting

⁷⁰ That the diocese of the Faeroe Islands is not a part of the CIR is due to the close connection between state and church in Denmark. Since the Faeroe Islands and Greenland are semi-autonomous, this has also affected the situation for the church; but the two dioceses have interpreted the situation differently. The diocese of Greenland’s membership in the CIR is not legally regarded in the same way as the membership of the 10 ‘old’ Danish dioceses. Nilsson, ‘Det mellemkirkelige Råd’, p195.

⁷¹ Ministerial order nr 301, 12 December 2007, ‘Folkekirkens Mellemkirkelige Råds Forretningsorden’. See also Espersen, *Folkekirkens styrelse*, p128, and Nilsson, ‘Det mellemkirkelige Råd’, p193f.

⁷² ELCD, CIR, ‘Notat om samarbejde mellem Folkekirkens mellemkirkelige Råd og folkekirkens biskopper’.

⁷³ Nissen, ‘Hvorfor nej i 1995, men ja i 2010?’, p100.

is discernable in the bishops' decision about the PCS in 1995. In the first line of the document it states that the submission for comment is a tradition in the ELCD.⁷⁴ This does not seem to be accurate; rather it seems to be an argument for the bishops' right to act on behalf of the church. No other consideration process was carried out in relation to any other ecumenical dialogue in the ELCD.⁷⁵ Lodberg notes that "since there was no established practice of how to deal with ecumenical texts and officially adopt them", the consideration process was decided by the bishop of Copenhagen and his eleven colleagues.⁷⁶ In the bishops' decision it is noteworthy that they refer to themselves as *bispemødet* – i.e. 'the Bishops' Conference' – and not only as 'the bishops'. The bishops here clearly tried to balance the common will in the consideration process without denying their independent episcopal responsibility for the church's true doctrine, and their right to make the decision on behalf of the ELCD, not just as twelve individuals, but as an episcopal collegium.⁷⁷ As we shall see, the result was a certain tension in the bishops' formal answer on behalf of the ELCD.

The Porvoo debate in Denmark helped the ELCD to question its *well-ordered anarchy* and develop a body – that is, the CIR – with competence for receiving and making decisions on ecumenical issues, even though this development seems to be unrelated to the theology of episcopacy and the content of the PCS.⁷⁸ This development can be evaluated in different ways. It can be understood as the ELCD developing from a congregationalist church order in 1995, when the bishops responded negatively to Porvoo, until in 2009 the formal central organ, the CIR, decided, with the bishops' approval, on behalf of the ELCD to join the Porvoo Communion. This is an accurate description, but it needs also to be nuanced and raises some difficult issues.

First, the CIR could be understood as a first step towards a synodical structure in the ELCD. At the same time, the state has emphasised that it must not be understood synodically: the mandate is only delegated from the state to the council. The council's dependence on the state is reinforced by the fact that it is the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs who appoints the two episcopal members of the council, and not the bishops themselves. Second, the role and understanding of episcopacy seem to be ambiguous in this process in the ELCD. Before 1970 it was the bishops who in practice took the ecumenical decisions, as a natural consequence of their doctrinal responsibility. In this respect the bishops have lost influence in the church. In the discussions before the CIR was formally constituted, there was political con-

⁷⁴ ELCD, the Bishops, 'Decision about the PCS'.

⁷⁵ Pedersen, 'Porvoo – et nyt kirkefællesskab med folkekirken på sidlinien', p47.

⁷⁶ Lodberg, 'The Nordic Churches and the Ecumenical Movement', p151.

⁷⁷ ELCD, the Bishops, 'Decision about the PCS'. See also Lodberg, 'Det folkekirkelige bispeembede', p133; Lam, 'Dansk Nej till Porvoo/Borgå'.

⁷⁸ Cf. Lodberg, 'The Danish "No" to Porvoo', p85; Gadegaard, 'Udviklingen i forholdet mellem kirke og stat', p232.

sensus that any new official representative body of the Folk Church should be neither the Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs nor the bishops.⁷⁹ On the other hand, in the light of the responsibility that the bishops have today, indirectly through participating in the CIR and directly through the agreement of cooperation with the CIR, their teaching authority has been formalised. This development has taken place without any ecclesiological argumentation or theological consideration about episcopacy. It could also be asked why the CIR should be regarded as more democratic than the bishops, as they are elected by each diocese. And, as the PCS points out, the bishops are to be understood, among other things, as representatives for the diocese in relation to the world and to the greater church.⁸⁰ Contrary to what Fledelius states above about the ELCD not being a state church, it seems that, through the establishment of the CIR, the ELCD has created parallel structures in the church, that confirms the identity of the ELCD as a state church. This is obvious in the case of the history of the CIR, whose mandate to make decisions is given not by the church but by the State's Minister of Ecclesiastical Affairs. The difficulties of defining the respective competences of the church and of the state according to the juridical principle *ius in sacris et ius circa sacra* have still not been solved in the ELCD.⁸¹

5.4. The Danish Porvoo debate 1994-2010

The enormous debate that followed the bishops' request for responses on the PCS (1994-1995) embraced a great variety of themes, not just theological arguments. As we have seen above, the ambiguous constitutional situation and the lack of a formal and independent administration of the ELCD was a common feature in the debate. Many who took part in it were critical of the process itself. The language in the document was difficult, and a much-criticised translation contributed to the uncertainty. In a summary of the Danish Porvoo debate, presented at the meeting between Danish and Anglican bishops in Copenhagen in 2002, Bishop Nissen notes that "there was a 'cultural gap' between the PCS and the congregations. Maybe it would have been wise instead to send a summary of the document with some comments to the congregations, instead of the entire text".⁸² The process as such became questionable, since the parish boards – and many of the priests – were not trained to read ecumenical texts. The result was that the ecclesiological content of the PCS probably eluded most of its readers. Ecumenism and inter-church relationships were understood as a threat to the national and

⁷⁹ Nilsson, 'Det mellemkirkelige Råd', p193, 199.

⁸⁰ PCS § 41-45.

⁸¹ See Christoffersen, 'Folkekirken og Porvoo - retligt set', p138f.

⁸² Nissen, 'The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark and the Porvoo', p3.

confessional identity of the ELCD and to its independence as a national church. Agreeing to the PD was therefore impossible, whatever its content, since its intentions were incompatible in principle with the dominant mentality of the Danish national church.⁸³ Many of the arguments in the debate were used repeatedly, and many of the debaters were stuck in controversies from the time of the Reformation, interpreted through the 19th century pietistic revival movements, and found it difficult to see that the PCS was written in a different way. The Anglican Church was identified by many with the mediaeval Roman Church, from which the ELCD was said, rather romantically, to have been liberated.⁸⁴ More of the debate articles were negative than were positive; and the positive ones were often more theologically elaborated, arguing against public opinion. Many of the critics were afraid that accepting the PCS would change the ELCD and give the bishops more power in an un-Danish way; and many criticised its focus on the episcopal office, which was said to be a non-Lutheran understanding. Often this was said from an understanding of the ELCD as being foremost Danish and Lutheran.⁸⁵ The fact that the PCS actually emphasises the common priesthood and the church as the people of God far more than the CA does, was missed by most debaters. Others argued that accepting the PCS would have negative ecumenical consequences, since it would isolate the ELCD from the German protestant churches. There were also debaters who stated that the PCS does not contradict the Lutheran confession. In the end the bishops did not have the freedom to approve the PCS in the face of this massively negative reception. Approximately 70% of the parishes' answers were negative and advised a rejection of the declaration.⁸⁶ The words of Provost Finn Riber Jensen can serve as one example:

⁸³ Jørgensen, 'Har folkekirken en fremtid', p229; Lodberg, 'The Nordic Churches and the Ecumenical Movement', p156; Lodberg, 'Burning Issues in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark', p75; Wiberg Pedersen, 'Folkekirken', p26.

⁸⁴ Cf. Lindhardt, 'Porvoo-biskopper', p37; Oldenburg, 'Sandhed og løgn', p51; Hvidt Breengaard, 'Teologisk uholdbart syn på summelighed', p44.

⁸⁵ Cf. Folketingets kirkeudvalg, 'Åbent samråd i Kirkeudvalget om Porvoo-erklæringen'; Langdahl, 'Porvoo opmuntrende og inspirerende – de danske såkaldt kirkelige retninger har idag fået et sekterisk præg', p89; Rønn Hornbech, 'Replik fra en lovgiver', p56ff; Bruun Hjøllund, 'Ked af den dogmatiske sikkerhed', p125; Dybdal, 'Stop Porvoo-motstandens endløse henvisning till Luther', p147; Ishøj, 'Kirken er i afgørende forstand usynlig', p62.

⁸⁶ Fledelius, 'Kirkekampen i Danmark', p155ff; Pedersen, 'Porvoo – et nyt kirkefællesskab med folkekirken på sidlinen', p53ff; Fledelius, 'Porvoo – ja eller nej', p15f; Gregersen, 'Fra Luther over Grundvig till Porvoo', p91ff; Norman Svendsen, 'Provokationen fra Porvoo', p103; Jørgensen, 'Om at læse Porvoo', p107; Moesgård-Nielsen, 'Porvoo understreger det almindelige præstedømme', p109; Højlund, 'Fællesudtalelsen fra Porvoo – en præsentation', p125; Allchin, 'En anglikansk replik til', p129; Bjerager, 'Ja til Porvoo', p141; Dybdal, 'Stop Porvoo-motstandens endløse henvisning till Luther', p147; Lodberg, 'The Danish "No" to Porvoo', p76ff; Lodberg, 'Dansk kirkeforståelse og kirkens enhed', p49f; Lodberg, 'Det folkekirkelige bispeembede', p132.

Porvoo is as impossible to get a grip on as a ghost, and it could create a lot of chaos. First and foremost, with its stilted, bombastic and institution-focused form, it is as un-Danish as it is possible to imagine. Why should it be allowed to saddle us with a lot of problems, and why should it be allowed to ravage the open and natural relations with the churches of our neighbouring countries, for which we today can rejoice?⁸⁷

An analysis of the Danish Porvoo debate must consider that different motives are intertwined, and thus it is often difficult to state whether an argument is theological, or is really church-political but disguised in theological clothing, and is related more to the Danish context than to the actual content of the PCS. This is especially true for those in favour of a Danish approval of the PCS who readily played down its content or who described it as a Lutheran document that the Anglicans now had accepted.⁸⁸ The analysis must recognise that the same position taken on an isolated issue may well be based on different ecclesiologies.

In the background of the Danish Porvoo debate was the knowledge that in 1951 the CoE had rejected the validity of the episcopate in the ELCD, the CoN, and the ELCI.⁸⁹ This is probably one reason why the Porvoo debate became so emotional in Denmark, since the PCS was understood as an implicit critique of the ELCD and its authenticity as a church. As one debater expressed it: “thus the real churches can allow us back into the warmth again”.⁹⁰ Psychologically this reaction is understandable, since most people do not like to be said to suffer from a deficiency. Subsequently many debaters railed against the emphasis on episcopal succession in the PCS, and used expressions like “bishop mythology”,⁹¹ and the PCS “shall not be used to smuggle a bishop’s office into the Danish Folk Church. We do not have any use for it”.⁹² However, it was not noted in the Danish discussion that section 54 of the PCS states that, due to the lack of unity between the Porvoo churches, they all suffer from deficiencies.

I will examine a selection of common themes in the discussion that are important for my aim of investigation. These themes are: 1. The Danish understanding of the Danish Reformation. 2. The PCS as non-Lutheran. 3. Visible and invisible church. 4. Episcopal ministry. 5. Apostolicity and episcopal succession. 6. Ordination – sacramental or not? 7. Ecumenism and the unity of the Church.

⁸⁷ Riber Jensen, ‘Porvoo kan lave megen ravage’, p45.

⁸⁸ Cf. Christiansen, ‘Velkommen till nadverfejring’; Gregersen, ‘Porvoo-dokumentet’.

⁸⁹ CoE, Anglican Committee Appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury for the Oslo Meeting, ‘The Oslo Report 1951’; Some of the debaters explicitly referred to the history: Thomsen, ‘Hvad star det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p9.

⁹⁰ Pape, ‘Et sprogligt underlødigt dokument’, p124; See also Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*, p22; Nørgaard-Højen, ‘Porvoo-Erklæringens forståelse af det historiske episkopat’, p86.

⁹¹ Hvidt Brengaard, ‘Porvoo som kirkesplittelse’, p44.

⁹² Thomsen, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen skal ikke bagatelliseres’, p21.

5.4.1. The Danish understanding of the Danish Reformation

As part of the irritation about the PCS's focus on episcopal succession, Danish Reformation history was interpreted by some debaters in an historical and nationalistic romantic perspective such as was common at the end of the 19th century. The Reformation was seen as a conscious break that freed the Danish church from Roman suppression and de-mythologized episcopacy, and as something to be proud of. Luther was understood to have deliberately broken with Rome and episcopal succession. The manifestation of this break was the ordination of the seven superintendents conducted by Bugenhagen in 1537. Bugenhagen was identified as a priest from Wittenberg with greater jurisdictional responsibility. Thus his ordination of the Danish superintendents meant a rejection of the Roman "guarantee-magic" of episcopal succession. Related to this kind of argument was the emphasis that the ELCD had the right to keep to its own tradition.⁹³

Other debaters criticised this kind of argumentation as dogmatic, narrow-minded, and anti-ecumenical, and read the Danish Reformation differently – as does the PCS.⁹⁴ Gregersen noted, for example, that the ordination conducted by Bugenhagen should not be understood as a particular act of demonstration against succession or the bishop's office, and that the pre-Reformation Archbishop of Lund was himself not ordained bishop.⁹⁵

It is likely that the strong identity in the ELCD as a Danish Lutheran church lay behind the evaluation of the Danish Reformation as a break from, rather than as an attempt to be in continuity with, the pre-Reformation church. This is important for the Porvoo debate, since the Porvoo solution is based on the historical continuity of the churches concerned and their shared heritage and identity. Without this continuity, the foundation for the PCS is removed. Another consequence of this identity is the evaluation of the PCS as non-Lutheran.

5.4.2. The PCS as non-Lutheran

In many of the Danish reactions to the PCS it was as if some 75 years of ecumenical dialogue had never happened. The argumentation was dressed in confessional and nationalist language, and the PCS was described as non-congruent with the Lutheran or the Danish Lutheran confession;⁹⁶ it bore the

⁹³ Lindhardt, 'Porvoo-biskopper', p37; Hvidt Breengaard, 'Porvoo som kirkesplittelse', p44; Oldenburg, 'Sandhed og løgn', p51; Pape, 'Et sprogligt underlødigt dokument', p123; Willesen, 'Porvoo-erklæringen som politisk dokument', p137f; See also Fledelius, 'Porvoo – ja eller nej', p15.

⁹⁴ PCS § 34. See also Pedersen, 'Episcopacy in Our Churches: Denmark', p85ff; Halliburton, 'Orders and Ordination', p155ff.

⁹⁵ Gregersen, 'Porvoo-dokumentet'; see also Grane, 'Porvoo-erklæringen', p46f.

⁹⁶ Balling, 'Til biskoppen over Københavns Stift', p2ff; Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, 'Til de Danske Biskopper!', p37ff; Kirkeligt Samfund, 'Kirkeligt Samfunds udtalelse om Porvoo-

marks of Anglicanism,⁹⁷ “reminding one more of Catholicism than of Danish Christianity” (sic!).⁹⁸ Others contradicted this kind of rhetoric, and said: “Stop the Porvoo antagonists’ endless referral to Luther – Luther did not wish to divide the visible unity of the Catholic Church”.⁹⁹ A certain lack of historicity was identified in the debate, “as if the church was established by Grundtvig and no theologian existed before Søren Kirkegaard. It is evidence of poverty if you forget the previous 18 centuries.”¹⁰⁰ There was also a nuanced and substantial argumentation based on the Lutheran confession that showed similarities to, and divergences from the PCS,¹⁰¹ and it was pointed out that the purpose of CA was ecumenical, not to divide the church – as various parties in the ELCD often seemed to do.¹⁰² Many stated that the Anglicans, through the PCS, had come closer to a Lutheran understanding, since PCS subordinates the importance of episcopal succession to the main form of succession – the Church’s proclamation.¹⁰³ Paradoxically, many interpreted this as a way for the Anglicans to trick the Danish Lutheran church into abandoning its confession. Theodor Jørgensen stated that there are two ways to read the PCS:

Both are critical. The first is an expression of a hermeneutic of suspicion, the second a hermeneutic of trust. ... [In the first] the maintenance of confessional identity becomes an end in itself. Therefore this interpretation is confessionalistic. In Lutheran terminology: From being *norma normata* the confessional writings are made *norma normans*. Paradoxically this is deeply un-Lutheran.

The other interpretation is proactive, constructive and confessional. ... The confessional identity is not an end in itself but is used as a hermeneutical key.

erklæringen’, p57; Pedersen, ‘Replik til Bent Christensen’, p33; Larsen, ‘Økumenik – snak eller alvor’, p4; Holm, ‘Jag agter ikke at underskrive’, p119; Rasmussen, ‘Porvoo igen’, p50; Thomsen, ‘Porvoo har kirkeforfatningsmæssige konsekvenser’, p34; Hvidt Breengaard, ‘Teologisk uholdbart syn på summelighed’, p63.

⁹⁷ Nissen, ‘Banebrytende aftale till offentlig debat’, p5f; Thomsen, ‘Hvad star det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p13f.

⁹⁸ Ishøj, ‘Kirken er i afgørende forstand usynlig’, p62; See also Balling, ‘Til biskoppen over Københavns Stift’, p2ff; Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p43; Thomsen, ‘Hvad star det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p14; Boisen, ‘Hvor er det dog svært med den Enhed’, p38; Juul Foss, ‘Æggedansen i Porvoo’, p35; Højlund, ‘Fællesudtalelsen fra Porvoo’, p65; Busch Nielsen, ‘Embede og kirke’, p156ff.

⁹⁹ Dybdal, ‘Stop Porvoo-motstandens endløse henvisning till Luther’, p147; See also Jørgensen, ‘Porvoo er et praktisk dokument’, p55; Rönnow, ‘Porvoo – så man kan forstå det!’, p135; Thomsen, ‘Konfessionalisme Og Økumenik’, p115ff.

¹⁰⁰ Larsen, ‘Tak for Porvoo’, p64; For an example Cf. Riis, ‘F.C. Porvoo – en kirke til superligaen’, p154.

¹⁰¹ Cf. Nørgaard-Højen, ‘Apostolisk succession og bispeembedet’, p267f; Aagaard, ‘Porvoo’, p44; Gregersen, ‘Fra Luther over Grundvig till Porvoo’, p91ff; Gregersen, ‘Tegnets magt eller magtens tecken’, p7; Gregersen, ‘Porvoo-dokumentet’, p16ff; Højlund, ‘Fællesudtalelsen fra Porvoo – en præsentation’, p7ff.

¹⁰² Jørgensen, ‘Om at læse Porvoo’, p107.

¹⁰³ Gadegaard, ‘Folkekirke eller bispekirke’.

The confession should serve the true proclamation of the Gospel and the right administration of the sacraments, not suppress it.¹⁰⁴

Most of the debaters belonged to the first group of interpreters.

5.4.3. Visible and invisible Church

The Danish denial of episcopal succession was often explained on the basis that the authenticity of a church is not about ‘hands on heads’ but about continuity in doctrine.¹⁰⁵ This question – about doctrine versus ordained ministry – is at its core about ecclesiology and about how the church’s apostolicity is understood. The question relates to such subjects as authority, scripture and tradition, the church as visible or invisible, ordained ministry, and sacramental understanding. Earlier the ELCD’s ecclesiological understanding was portrayed as minimalist, seeing the church as invisible rather than visible, and the ordained ministry, structure and organisation as non-doctrinal factors, with consequences for the understanding of church law. The common priesthood and CA 7’s proclamation of the word and the administration of the sacraments are emphasised. This minimalist and docetic ecclesiology¹⁰⁶ predetermined the content of the Danish Porvoo debate and defined how most debaters understood the PCS and formulated their critique of it. A consequence of this ecclesiology, consciously or unconsciously, was that many debaters did not see that the PCS is primarily an ecclesiological document that has to be interpreted ecclesologically. Instead, many came to be occupied with isolated features of the PCS that were described differently from what they were used to.

One exception was Niels Thomsen, principal of the theological college in Løgumkloster and editor of *Fønix*, who noted in his critique that “the more you work with” the PCS, the more it becomes clear that its consequences emanate from an ecclesiology that concentrates on the visibility of the church:

In the long run the battle should be over this ecclesiology. We in the Danish church are usually badly equipped for this, since our church has not used its energy to speak about itself, but about the content it is commissioned to bring to people. When we thus enter a period when everyone says that the church is the most important theme, we are badly prepared to defend our position. The authors of the Porvoo document do not have such difficulties. The whole document is a document about the church. The aim is to promote *visible unity*

¹⁰⁴ Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p11; Jørgensen, ‘Om at læse Porvoo’, 107f.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. Højlund, ‘Fællesudtalelsen fra Porvoo – en præsentation’, p5ff; Gregersen, ‘Porvoo-dokumentet’, p16ff.

¹⁰⁶ The German theologian Edmund Schlink has defined the separation of the spiritual and material dimensions of the church as ecclesiological docetism, see Schlink, *Ökumenische Dogmatik*, p687.

between the churches. ... Organisation and structure and office we can deal with in the church law and discuss as church politics, but church law does not belong to dogmatics. ... The picture of the church that is seen within the Porvoo document does not look like the church I was brought up in, with Lutheran proclamation and the hymns of Grundtvig. In that church we speak more about the common priesthood than about the ministerial one.¹⁰⁷

Based on his ecclesiology, Thomsen recommended a refusal of the PCS. Thomsen did not go unchallenged, and was explicitly criticised by Søren Poulsen, who said: “Our Lutheran identity is not abandoned by adopting the PCS; it is something to rejoice over, if you do not regard the conditions in Ryslinge [a free-congregation (*frimenighed*) where Thomsen had earlier ministered] as the role model for the whole of Christendom”.¹⁰⁸

To understand the various approaches to the PCS in Denmark, it is important to note that they were mainly non-systematic and theologically repetitive. The content of the Danish discussion could be described as a tension between two poles: a protestant ecclesiological position, and one that was more catholic.¹⁰⁹ According to the protestant position, the church is understood as foremost invisible, and all kinds of ecclesial structure and organisation are regarded with suspicion. Office is identified as a function arising from the common priesthood; and despite the fact that the ELCD has bishops, it is regarded as non-episcopal. Ordination is seen at most as a juridical act. The Christian life, according to this understanding, is seen as something that is not corporate, but rather is mainly individual, as a *Christianity without a church*. In Danish church life, this pole is represented by the various 19th century revival movements, the Grundtvigian movement, and the ‘free-congregations’ (*frimenigheder*), which also have influenced the ELCD as whole. The protestant understanding of the Church is at the same time in full accord with liberal and secularised understanding, that sees ‘church’ foremost as composed of individual believers. This pole evaluated the PCS as

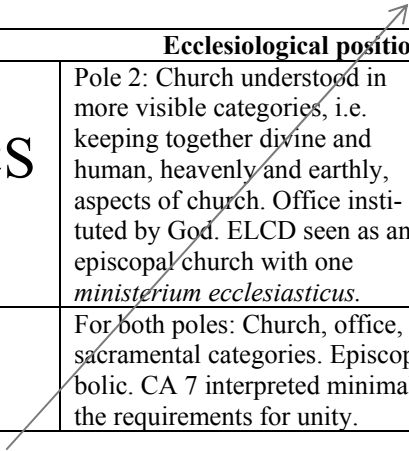
¹⁰⁷ Thomsen, ‘Hvad står det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p14f. “Men jo længere man arbejder med den, des klarere bliver det, at disse konsekvenser er selvfølgelig ud fra det kirkesyn, der ligger bag erklæringen, koncentreret i forståelsen af kirkens synlighed. I det lange løb er det om den kirkeforståelsen, slaget skal stå. Her er vi almindeligvis dårligt rustet i den danske kirke, fordi vores kirke ikke har brugt sin energi til at tale om sig selv, men om det indhold, det er dens opgave at bringe folk. Når vi såer løbet ind i en periode, hvor alle mener, at kirken er det vigtigste teologiske tema, er vi dårligt forberedte til at klare os vor stilling. Sådanne vanskeligheder har Porvoo-dokumentets forfattere ikke. Hele dokumentet er et kirkedokument. Foremålet er at fremme den *synlige enhed* mellem kirkerne. ... Organisation og struktur og embede kan vi behandle i kirkeretten og diskutere som kirkepolitik, men kirkeretten hører ikke til dogmatiken ... Det billede af kirken, der ses bag Porvoo-dokumentet, ligner ikke den kirke, jeg er vokset op i med luthersk forkyndelse og Grundtvigs salmer. Der taler vi mer om det almindelige præstedømme end om det særlige.”

¹⁰⁸ Poulsen, ‘Vor lutherske identitet prægives ikke med Porvoo’, p33.

¹⁰⁹ Jørgensen, ‘Har folkekirken en fremtid’, p217ff; Gregersen, ‘Tegnets magt eller magtens tecken’, p7; See also Brodd, ‘The Hidden Agenda’, p70f. Brodd makes a slightly different distinction between the protestant and the more catholic sacramental approach.

entirely non-Lutheran, as alien to the independent Danish national church, and as an Anglican or RC document.

The more catholic pole also regarded ‘church’ primarily as invisible, but emphasised, in relation to Luther’s seven *nota ecclesiae*, that the church is also visible. Office was seen as instituted by God, with reference to CA 5, and episcopacy was affirmed with reference to CA 28. Bishops were seen as essentially priests with greater jurisdiction. With reference to CA 7, those debaters argued primarily for an interpretation that placed the ordained ministry and its form outside the requirements for the church’s unity, but still as positive and necessary for the church’s proclamation and the administration of the sacraments. In its evaluation of the PCS, this pole was divided over whether or not the PCS was compatible with the Lutheran confession. Schematically, the different positions in the ELCD could be shown in these terms:



| | | |
|------------|--|---|
| PCS | Pole 2: Church understood in more visible categories, i.e. keeping together divine and human, heavenly and earthly, aspects of church. Office instituted by God. ELCD seen as an episcopal church with one <i>ministerium ecclesiasticus</i> . | Pole 1: 19th Century revival movements, ‘free-congregations’ (<i>frimenigheder</i>), Grundtvigian movement. Church as invisible, and individualistic piety. |
| | For both poles: Church, office, and ordination seen primarily in non-sacramental categories. Episcopal succession as mythology or symbolic. CA 7 interpreted minimalistically, mainly placing office outside the requirements for unity. | |

Debaters who located themselves to the left of the tangent were positive, or mostly positive, about the PCS; conversely, those to the right of the tangent were against a Danish approval of the PCS. Depending on the position adopted in this schematic model, the PCS was evaluated as either (1) non-Lutheran or (2) Lutheran:

1. The PCS – a non-Lutheran ecclesiology: According to this understanding, the PCS’s ecclesiology is alien to the Lutheran tradition, since the PCS aims to unite the visible church, which makes the church an institution.¹¹⁰ The distinguished Danish Luther scholar Leif Grane concluded:

But what kind of church is it [in the PCS]? It seems to me that it is a church that appears visible as an organisation. The document sees the church both as a ‘divine reality’ and as a human institution, but the whole time it is the *visi-*

¹¹⁰ Cf. Kirkeligt Samfund, ‘Kirkeligt Samfunds udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen’, p57; Ishøj, ‘Kirken er i afgørende forstand usynlig’, p62; Grane, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen’, p47; Busch Nielsen, ‘Embede og kirke’, p168.

ble church that is reflected upon and talked about. It is admitted that it is ambiguous and that ‘the sign of the historic succession’ does not guarantee fidelity ‘to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission’ (§51), but it is done without any recognition that the *true* church is hidden and is therefore not available to our senses in any other way than through the proclamation of the gospel and the true administration of the sacraments. ... [The problem with the church in the PCS is] that the church is something different from, and more than, the community created by proclamation and the sacraments. It is in that case also something *in itself*, and has divine authority – apart from the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments. That something like this is sought is also clear: the community given by Christ is not sufficient (§21), because it is necessary for unity to become even ‘more visible and structured’ (§22).¹¹¹

For Grane the PCS is problematic because it emphasises the visibility of the church, and does not describe the true Church as foremost invisible.¹¹²

Among those debaters it was also common to set the ordained ministry in opposition to the common priesthood, and to see the latter as missing from the PCS.¹¹³ The ecclesiology in the PCS was defined as a bishop’s church “from above”, as opposed to the ELCD, which was described as a Folk Church “from below” – the meaning derived from CA 7.¹¹⁴ As a consequence it was remarked that, through Porvoo, the bishops would become over-important and would be regarded as a part of the church’s *esse*. The case was argued in this way as the bishop would not be a part of the church, but something imposed on the church from the outside. Apart from the identification of the church as invisible, a supposed contradiction between the

¹¹¹ Grane, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen’, p47. “Men hvad er det for en kirke [i PCS]? Det er, synes det mig, den kirke, der fremtræder synligt som en organisation. Dokumentet regner med kirken dels som ”en guddommelig virkelighed”, dels som en menneskelig institution, men det er hele vejen den *synlige* kirke, der tænkes og tales om. Det indrømmes, at den er tvetydig, også at ”den apostoliske successions tegn” ikke garanterer troskaben ”mod alle sider af apostolsk tro, liv og tjeneste”, (§51), men det sker uden nogen form for tale om, at den *sande* kirke er skjult og derfor ikke tilgængelig for vore sanser på anden måde end gennem evangeliets forkyndelse og sakramenternes rette forvaltning. ... [Problemet med kyrkan i PCS er] at kirken er andet og mere end det fællesskab, som forkyndelsen og sakramenterne skaber. Den er i så fald også noget *i sig selv*, der har guddommelig autoritet – ved siden af evangeliets forkyndelse og sakramenternes forvaltning. At det er noget sådant, der tilstræbes, synes det også at vise, når vi ikke kan klare os med det fællesskab, det er givet med Kristus (§ 21), fordi det er nødvendigt, at enheden bliver endnu ”mere synlig og struktureret” (§ 22). See also Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p42ff.

¹¹² For a further discussion about this ecclesiology see Chapter 10.

¹¹³ Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p67ff; Thomsen, ‘Hvad står det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p15; Thomsen, ‘Porvoo igen’, p40ff; Rasmussen, ‘Porvoo igen’, p50; Toftdahl, ‘Porvoo og Folkekirken egen enhed’, p151.

¹¹⁴ Rasmussen, ‘Porvoo igen’, p50; Gadegaard, ‘Folkekirke eller bispekirke’, p20; Damgaard Nielsen, ‘Folkekirken är tålsom’, p101; Toftdahl, ‘Porvoo og Folkekirken egen enhed’, p151; Thomsen, ‘Porvoo har kirkeforfatningsmæssige konsekvenser’, p34; Aspel, ‘Bispekirke eller folkekirke’, p49; Højlund, ‘Fællesudtalelsen fra Porvoo – en præsentation’, p8; Raun Jørgensen, ‘FUP - igen’, p170.

common priesthood and the ordained ministry is a crucial aspect of this interpretation of the PCS.

2. The PCS – compatible with Lutheran ecclesiology: According to this evaluation, ecclesiology and ministry in the PCS were seen as in accordance with Lutheran understanding and that of the ELCD. Those debaters argued that the PCS stresses the common priesthood more than CA does, and that it is in agreement with Luther.¹¹⁵ Jørgensen said that the PCS could balance the priest-centeredness that, despite the theoretical understanding of the ordained ministry, had been the case in practice in Lutheran churches.¹¹⁶ The PCS's description of episcopacy was further seen as a solution to the ELCD's constitutional problem, and that "no one can make the decision on behalf of the church".¹¹⁷ The visibility of the church in the PCS was important in this line of argument, and was said to be anchored in the New Testament, in relation to CA 7 and Pauline ecclesiology, and in agreement with Luther's ecclesiology, evident in his seven *notae ecclesiae*.¹¹⁸ By contrast, the modern ecclesiological discussion, and the PCS's grounding in the ecumenical movement, were notable in the argument of the more catholic pole. As expressed by Aagaard:

Both *Niagara* and *Porvoo* use the sacramental theological conceptual framework, which has been the only creative element in the newer ecclesiological reflection; but with *Niagara* the Lutheran-Anglican dialogue accomplished what the Second Vatican Council did not – that is, to base the church entirely in eschatology, which anticipates all signs, including the church as the sign of the Kingdom of God.¹¹⁹

This also indicates another difference between the two approaches. The second pole was open to ecclesiological developments, while the first was mainly repetitive and protectionist in its evaluation of the PCS.¹²⁰ It should also be noted that a theologian like Nørgaard-Højen would be more likely to subscribe to the second ecclesiology described here, but still evaluated the PCS as non-Lutheran because of the PCS's understanding of the ordained ministry.¹²¹

¹¹⁵ Aagaard, 'Porvoo', p41; Lodberg, 'Udtalelse til biskopperne ang. Porvoo-erklæringen', p79; Lodberg, 'Menighedsråd vildledt om Porvoo', p67; Gregersen, 'Den alsidige kirken', p23; Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p20.

¹¹⁶ Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p7.

¹¹⁷ Pedersen, 'Porvoo og de kvindelige præster', p61.

¹¹⁸ Lodberg, 'Udtalelse til biskopperne ang. Porvoo-erklæringen', p79; Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p6.

¹¹⁹ Aagaard, 'Porvoo', p41.

¹²⁰ For examples of the latter, see Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, 'Til de Danske Biskopper!', p36ff; Nøjgaard, 'Porvoo-dokumentets forførelse', p139.

¹²¹ E.g. Nørgaard-Højen, *Økumenisk Teologi*.

It seems that Thomsen was very clear when he remarked that “the battle should be over ecclesiology”,¹²² particularly about the church as visible or hidden. At its core this is about the relationship between office on the one hand and proclamation and the administration of the sacraments on the other; or, differently expressed, how the ordained ministry is understood in relation to CA 7. The four university theologians whom the bishops consulted in 1995 all considered the relationship between ministry and ecclesiology to be vaguely defined in the PCS.¹²³ The tension was clearly expressed by Kirsten Busch Nielsen:

The question is, whether – and if so, how – the ordained ministry should be positioned in this, as the *Augsburg Confession* says in art. 7 that it is sufficient to be agreed about the true unity of the church; or conversely, whether it belongs to humans traditions or customs, and thus need not be found in the same form everywhere.¹²⁴

The core question can be defined as the relationship between ecclesiology and the gospel.¹²⁵ The first Danish approach to ecclesiology has the consequence that the church is seen as a vehicle for the gospel, while the second understanding sees the church as a part of the Gospel and as an expression of the proclamation of the gospel.¹²⁶ An ecclesiology based on a minimalist interpretation of CA 7 sees the church as something that *happens*, while the second approach sees it as something that *is*.¹²⁷ Put differently: in the Porvoo debate the difference was between a functional and a sacramental ecclesiology. The reluctance to use sacramental descriptions of the church is probably due to the too-easy identification in Denmark of the visibility of the church with the church as institution, while the late 20th century description of the church as a sacramental people of God played only a very small role in the discussion.¹²⁸ These different ecclesiological approaches have further consequences for the relationship between church law and dogmatics, and between ecclesiology and episcopal ministry.¹²⁹

¹²² Thomsen, ‘Hvad står det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p14f.

¹²³ Raahauge, *Fønix - Saer-nummer om Porvoo erklæringen*, 1995.

¹²⁴ Busch Nielsen, ‘Embede og kirke’, p108; See also Widmann, ‘Udtalelse om Porvooerklæringen’, p122. “Spørgsmålet er, hvorvidt og i så fald hvordan embedet skal indplaceres blandt de ting, som *Den Augsburgske Bekendelse* i art. 7 siger, at det til kirkens sande enhed er tilstrækkeligt at være enige om, eller hvorvidt det omvendt hører blandt de menneskelige overleveringer eller skikke, som det ikke er nødvendigt at have i samme skikkelse overalt.”

¹²⁵ Cf. Nørgaard-Højen, ‘Kirken og kirkerne’, p265, note 1.

¹²⁶ Pedersen, ‘Porvoodokumentet og bispeembedet’, p30; Harbsmeier, ‘Kirkeforståelse i folkekirkelig praksis’, p71.

¹²⁷ Cf. Aagaard, *Identifikation af kirken*, p20ff.

¹²⁸ Cf. Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p15.

¹²⁹ In Chapter 16 I will discuss the relation between ecclesiology and law in a general perspective and in relation to the implementation of the PCS in the Porvoo Communion.

5.4.4. Episcopal ministry

A common reaction against the PCS in the Danish discussion was an emphasis that the ELCD only knows one *ministerium ecclesiasticum*. The critique reflects an ambiguity in the ELCD about the relationship between priest and bishop, both theologically and legally, as well as the relationship between church and state.¹³⁰ Two main kinds of reaction to episcopacy can be discerned in the Danish discussion. The first is about what a bishop really is, while the second is about the role of the bishop in the church.

(1.) Behind the Danish reaction to the PCS lies the understanding that “a bishop does not in principle have a churchly office other than that of a parish priest; he/she has a different function, but not thereby another (higher) office”, as Nørgaard-Højen (for example) put it.¹³¹ Others stated that this view stands in contrast to the importance that the bishop’s ordination has in the ELCD, and as it is formulated.¹³² When the relationship between priest, bishop, and the one ordained ministry of the church was discussed, apart from bald statements such as “the ELCD only has one office”, it was seen in relation to CA articles 5, 7, 14 and 28. Kjeldgaard-Pedersen claimed that the PCS’s notion about ordained ministry as instituted by God was “unacceptable” to the Lutheran confession,¹³³ and stated that “there is only *one* office, the ministry of the word, which is identical with the common priesthood”.¹³⁴

Widmann argued against the threefold ministry that “the Reformation stands and falls by the fact that there is only one office, the ministry of the word, and that it only exists in respond to the calling of a parish”,¹³⁵ otherwise the Reformation must be understood as “illegitimate” since it conducted non-episcopal ordinations. This notion is important, since it represents the kind of juridical approach to ecclesiology and office that the PCS tries to overcome through its sacramental ecclesiological approach. The advocates for the Porvoo view of episcopacy pointed out that CA 28 talks about episcopacy as *iure divino*. Most of those arguing against the PCS did not consider the understanding of episcopacy in CA 28, but merely claimed that the PCS was incompatible with the Lutheran or Danish understanding. It was

¹³⁰ Cf. Busch Nielsen et al., *Folkekirkens embeder*; Vincents, ‘Biskopper ønsker folkekirkens højeste embede kortlagt’; Christiansen, ‘Indvielse av præster og biskopper’, p10.

¹³¹ Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*, p33; See also Christensen, “‘Porvoo’”, p22; Balling, ‘Til biskoppen over Københavns Stift’, p2f; Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p28; Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p43; Stenbæk, ‘Porvoo-dokumenterne, biskopperne og retten’, p114.

¹³² Pedersen, ‘Porvoodokumentet og bispeembedet’, p29; Raun Iversen, ‘Teologiske og juridiske mellemværender’, p114; Christiansen, ‘Indvielse av præster og biskopper’, p10.

¹³³ Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p72, 84.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, p70.

¹³⁵ Widmann, ‘Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen’, p128, note 6. “Reformatioen står og falder med, at der kun er et embede, ordets tjeneste, og at det alene er til for at følge en menigheds kald.”

stated that episcopacy in the PCS is understood as belonging to the church's *esse*, contrary to the Lutheran understanding of the ELCD.¹³⁶

Nørgaard-Højen emphasised that *iure divino* in CA 28 is about the bishop's function, i.e. *episcopé*, not about the office as such. He stated that Lutherans and Anglicans agree that ordained ministry and the need for *episcopé* are *iure divino*, but "what they do not agree about is whether the *bishop's* office is also" *iure divino*, since the function of *episcopé* could be executed in forms other than episcopal, as has been done in various Lutheran and continental-protestant churches.¹³⁷ Jørgensen could agree with this description, but he also said that the PCS can be understood in more functional categories. He said that there was an unfortunate vagueness about episcopacy in the PCS and its relationship to the apostolic ministry. Altogether he found it hard to see whether the PCS regarded episcopacy as the source of apostolic ministry and *episcopé* – in which case the priestly office is a merely derived from episcopacy – or, whether episcopacy and the priestly office are regarded as equivalent to apostolic ministry. Jørgensen noted further that:

This vagueness must be resolved. In the light of CA 7, there is no obstacle to a Lutheran and an episcopal church entering into fellowship of office, as long as it is agreed that the ordained ministry of the church does not have any value in itself, but that its purpose is the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments, and to that extent it is necessary. The concrete shape of the ordained ministry of the church may be regarded as belonging to human traditions, which – according to CA 7 – do not need to be agreed on for true unity in the church. Therefore it has to be clarified ... Is the ordained ministry necessary in its own right, or is it necessary because of the necessity of proclamation and of the sacraments?¹³⁸

Important for the discussion of the church's ministry was the tension between ontological and functional interpretations of the episcopal ministry as necessary or contingent in the church and, as a result, whether episcopacy is constitutive of the church or merely a function in the church.¹³⁹ For Jørgensen this meant that episcopal succession is a sign instituted not by God but by the church, as a sign of fidelity to the church's continuity and apostolicity. Jørgensen recommended approval of the PD based on this functional understanding of ordained ministry, as long as this Lutheran interpretation of

¹³⁶ Grane, 'Porvoo-erklæringen', p47; Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*, p12ff, 23, 27 note 38, 29f; Nørgaard-Højen, 'Kommentarer til Jan Nilssons bemærkninger', p8f; Thomsen, 'Hvad står det i Porvooerklæringen?', p10.

¹³⁷ Nørgaard-Højen, 'Kommentarer til Jan Nilssons bemærkninger', p8f; Nørgaard-Højen, *Økumenisk Teologi*, p174; Cf. Thomsen, 'Porvoo igen', p41; Gregersen, 'Fra Luther over Grundvig till Porvoo', p95f.

¹³⁸ See also Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p28f; Widmann, 'Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen', p121.

¹³⁹ On the contingency of episcopacy and historical succession, see Nørgaard-Højen, 'Kirken og kirkerne', p267, note 18.

the PCS was emphasised by the ELCD.¹⁴⁰ In comparison with Nørgaard-Højen, Jørgensen differed in his evaluation of the PCS as being compatible with Lutheran doctrine.

Gregersen noted that episcopacy in the PCS is a practical necessity, but not a God-given necessity. According to Gregersen, the new element here, in comparison with the Danish tradition, is that episcopacy is seen as an expression of unity with other churches. As a consequence of Gregersen's functional motivation for agreeing to the PCS, he was of the opinion that the PCS would not close the door on the ELCD's relationships with non-episcopal churches, since episcopacy belongs to the church's *bene esse*, not its *esse*.¹⁴¹

(2.) Many reacted negatively to the episcopal focus in the PCS as something extraneous to the ELCD that would require a reappraisal of the bishop's ministry.¹⁴² There was concern that the PCS would give the bishops an extended mandate, since episcopacy was given theological significance.¹⁴³ Some contradicted this remark: they said that the PCS did not give the bishops more power.¹⁴⁴ Similarly, it was stated that it was foreign to the ELCD to say that the bishops' collegium had theological importance, since there are only individual bishops in the ELCD.¹⁴⁵ Others remarked that the PCS could help the ELCD to analyse its structure and lack of competence to make decisions on its own rather than leaving them to the state, as a capacity emanating from the ELCD itself as a church.¹⁴⁶

The difference between the Danish minimalist and functional ecclesiology and the ecclesiology of the PCS is most succinctly found in the Danish ambiguity towards episcopacy and episcopal succession. On the one hand, it was claimed that the Danish episcopacy and church are as apostolic as the other churches of the Porvoo Communion; on the other hand, it was claimed in harsh terms that the ELCD does not want the episcopacy and ecclesiology of the other churches. But if the latter is the case, the debaters cannot really be offended when episcopal churches question the validity of the Danish episcopate. The Porvoo solution is based on the intention of those churches without episcopal succession to live in apostolic continuity, including the preservation of episcopal ministry. However, if this intention is not there, the Porvoo solution is no longer applicable.

¹⁴⁰ Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p29.

¹⁴¹ Gregersen, 'Fra Luther over Grundvig till Porvoo', p99.

¹⁴² Thomsen, 'Hvad star det i Porvooerklæringen?'

¹⁴³ Thomsen, 'Porvoo har kirkeforfatningsmæssige konsekvenser', p34; Thomsen, 'Porvooerklæringen skal ikke bagatelliseres', p21.

¹⁴⁴ Gregersen, 'Den alsidige kirken', p23.

¹⁴⁵ Thomsen, 'Hvad star det i Porvooerklæringen?'; Pedersen, 'Bordeauxfarvet tryksag fra bispekontoret', p39.

¹⁴⁶ Poulsen, 'Vor lutherske identitet prisgives ikke med Porvoo', p33; Larsen, 'Tak for Porvoo', p64.

Crucial to the Danish Porvoo debate is how the church's ordained ministry is understood. Is it derived from the common priesthood, or is it instituted by God? Both of those approaches were common in the Danish debate. Another question is whether ministry is understood as one and/or threefold, and whether episcopacy should be understood as *iure divino*, as a practical necessity, or as a contingent structure in the church.

5.4.5. Apostolicity and episcopal succession

The repudiation of episcopal succession in the Danish discussion served as a common basis. Because it is so integrated into the identity of the ELCD, nearly all the debaters in one way or another had to pay their respects to this view if they were to participate in the discussion. Linked to this repudiation was the Danish scepticism towards a sacramental understanding of ordination. From both advocates and opponents of the PCS, it was common, but with different levels of revulsion, to speak of episcopal succession in terms like these: “We don’t buy the theory about the ‘historic succession’, but we have every reason to look to the old traditions of the church”,¹⁴⁷ or “Apostolic succession is against the Danish church order”,¹⁴⁸ or “We do not need it”,¹⁴⁹ or “We do not emphasise the apostolic succession as much as” the PCS,¹⁵⁰ or it is a “historical fiction”,¹⁵¹ or “Anglican succession magic ... in competition with Lutheran theology” serving neither “church nor faithful”,¹⁵² or the “magic pipeline theory [is] denied” in the PCS.¹⁵³ Three different kinds of interpretation of the Porvoo solution were common in the debate:

1. Through the PCS, the Anglican churches have changed their understanding of episcopal succession, and no longer regard it as essential.
2. The PCS is Anglican rhetoric and colonialism.
3. The PCS means that the Anglicans have opened themselves to a broader understanding of episcopal succession, while preserving its value.

Of those views, the first and the second were more common than the third.

1. *Through the PCS, the Anglican churches have changed their understanding of episcopal succession, and no longer regard it as essential: A*

¹⁴⁷ Larsen, ‘Dokumentet til gensidig anerkendelse’, 13.

¹⁴⁸ Rønn Hornbech, ‘Replik fra en lovgiver’, p22.

¹⁴⁹ Pape, ‘Et sprogligt underlødigt dokument’, p123.

¹⁵⁰ Bruun Hjøllund, ‘Ked af den dogmatiske sikkerhed’, p125.

¹⁵¹ Balling, ‘Til biskoppen over Københavns Stift’, p2.

¹⁵² Quotation from Pape, ‘Et sprogligt underlødigt dokument’, p124; see also Rönnow, ‘Porvoo – så man kan forstå det!’, p135.

¹⁵³ Quotation from Lodberg, ‘Udtalelse til biskopperne ang. Porvoo-erklæringen’, p79; see also Aagaard, ‘Porvoo’, 39.

common Danish interpretation of the Porvoo solution was that the Anglican churches had changed and abandoned their traditional idea of episcopal succession, which made it possible for them to recognise the Danish episcopate.¹⁵⁴ This particular interpretation was put forward by advocates of approving the PCS, who shared a non-substantial understanding of episcopal succession. Common to most of these debaters was that they recognised that the PCS means that the Anglican churches have broadened their understanding. This was interpreted, however, as if the Anglican churches in practice had embraced an understanding of episcopal succession as non-essential. It is noteworthy that the other churches in the Porvoo Communion were seldom discussed. The interpretation was elaborated in different ways: from a functional approach, the bishop of Lolland-Falster, Thorkild Græsholt, regarded episcopal succession as a historic-theological relic without any meaning, portraying the PCS as a way for the Anglicans to be unchained from an embarrassment, i.e. episcopal succession.¹⁵⁵

In his answer to Nørgaard-Højen's critique of the Danish approval of the PCS, the CIR's theological secretary Jan Nilsson stated that "the historic episcopate is no longer a precondition for apostolic succession, but is only understood as a 'sign of the church's unity'".¹⁵⁶ This wording is close to section 53 of the PCS, on sign and unity. Another exponent of this interpretation was Gregersen, who explained at length in several articles the broadened perspective of the PCS and its ecclesiological basis. At the same time he described the content of the agreement as saying that episcopal succession "is not necessary for the authenticity of a church" and "the church in no way stands or falls by apostolic succession",¹⁵⁷ and that the PCS had "abandoned the traditional Anglican view, where the apostolic character of the priestly office is dependent of the apostolic succession of the bishops who ordain".¹⁵⁸ He further understood the PCS to have said that "historic succession is one among other signs, but not the inner core of the church!"¹⁵⁹ Gregersen argued for the approval of the PD, and said that it did not oblige the ELCD to invite other bishops to ordinations.¹⁶⁰ It is difficult to say whether Gregersen's argument should be understood as political, considering the largely negative

¹⁵⁴ Widmann, 'Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen', p125; Ertner Rasmussen, 'Det positive ved Porvoo', p59; Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p22; Græsholt, 'Med og uden bispehue', p114; Gregersen, 'Tegnets magt eller magtens tecken', p7; Nilsson, 'Bemærkninger til Peder Nørgaard-Højen', p2; Gregersen, 'Porvoo-dokumentet', p16f; Gregersen, 'Fra Luther over Grundvig till Porvoo', p91; Thomsen, 'Porvoo-erklæringen skal ikke bagatelliseres', p21; Stenbæk, 'Porvoo-dokumenterne, biskopperne og retten', p11ff.

¹⁵⁵ Græsholt, 'Med og uden bispehue', p35; Stenbæk, 'Porvoo-dokumenterne, biskopperne og retten', p114.

¹⁵⁶ Nilsson, 'Bemærkninger til Peder Nørgaard-Højen', p2; See also Højlund, 'Fællesudtalelsen fra Porvoo – en præsentation', p7.

¹⁵⁷ Gregersen, 'Porvoo-dokumentet', p17.

¹⁵⁸ Gregersen, 'Fra Luther over Grundvig till Porvoo', p91.

¹⁵⁹ Gregersen, 'Porvoo-dokumentet', p17.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p18.

Danish opinion; at least, Thomsen accused him of this,¹⁶¹ but in the end he described episcopal succession in a symbolic way, and criticised the “sacramental sounding wording” in PCS §48 as “embarrassing” although not “constitutive for the church”.¹⁶²

This understanding of episcopal succession is not a comprehensive description of the PCS’s understanding, nor is it sufficient as an explanation, since it only moves the question from episcopal succession to the meaning of ‘sign’, and as such it does not say whether ‘sign’ is understood as a symbol, in its modern sense, or in an effective way, as stated in the PCS §48. Common to those who argued this way was the view that the Anglicans had abandoned their traditional understanding of episcopal succession. However, the claim of the PCS is not only that the Anglicans have undertaken a re-interpretation, but also that the PCS represents a common Lutheran-Anglican re-interpretation and deepening. This fact eluded this first group of Danish debaters, who stated that the Anglicans had changed, with the consequence that the ELCD could continue unchanged.

2. *The PCS is Anglican rhetoric and colonialism*: Many who argued that the PCS would mean the re-introduction of episcopal succession interpreted the PCS as mere Anglican rhetoric and colonialism. In a way this is true since – expressed in isolation – the intention is to re-introduce episcopal succession. However, the intention is not to trick the ELCD, but rather to achieve a common deepening in order “to unlock” the churches “from limited and negative perceptions”.¹⁶³ The tension between the PCS and many Danish debaters appeared when episcopal succession was understood in a ‘pipeline’ way without the PCS’s broadened ecclesiology. This created much irritation, and some asked: “Where did the radical solution disappear?”¹⁶⁴ and the PCS was understood as an “Anglican crusade in the north and east”.¹⁶⁵ Rasmus Nøjgaard stated, under the headline “The seduction of the PCS”, “the PCS is a way for the Anglican churches to introduce the historic succession into the ELCD on the cost of a changed identity for the ELCD”.¹⁶⁶ Contrary to the claim that the PCS was a radical solution to a difficult problem with episcopacy and succession, those subjects were seen as the *scandalon* of the statement, and opposed to the ELCD’s identity as Folk Church.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶¹ Thomsen, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen skal ikke bagatelliseres’, p21.

¹⁶² Gregersen, ‘Tegnets magt eller magtens tecken’, p7.

¹⁶³ PCS Foreword §9.

¹⁶⁴ Pape, ‘Et sprogligt underlødigt dokument’, p123f; See also Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p91f, 98.

¹⁶⁵ Willessen, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen som politisk dokument’, p137.

¹⁶⁶ Nøjgaard, ‘Porvoo-dokumentets forførelse’, p140; See also Thomsen, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen skal ikke bagatelliseres’, p21; Thomsen, ‘Hvad star det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p9; Thaning, ‘Efter Porvoo’; Pedersen, ‘Replik til Bent Christensen’, p33; Kamstrup Olesen, ‘KD’, p52; Grane, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen’, p48.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Gadegaard, ‘Folkekirke eller bispekirke’, p20.

It was a common feature in the Danish discussion that many did not understand just how radical the PCS was, and so its content was understood as a reintroduction of episcopal succession into the ELCD and as a way of giving the bishops greater importance.¹⁶⁸ In the Danish debate there were mainly two ways to understand episcopal succession: as non-essential/symbolic, or as magic.¹⁶⁹ The vice-chairman of CIR, Anders Gadegaard, found both those features in the PCS, which he found contradictory; and he noted: “So, the laying on of hands as effective means was not abolished after all”.¹⁷⁰ Nørgaard-Højten offered this interpretation as well, and contrasted the Anglican openness to churches without episcopal succession with the position of the PCS, which in practice makes episcopal succession normative, not an *optional extra*. If this is the case, Nørgaard-Højten continued, the episcopate in those churches lacking episcopal succession must be regarded as inauthentic. But since they are supposed to be recognised through the PD, “something remains vague and seems not to have been thought through in the PCS”.¹⁷¹ With reference to the Meissen and Reuilly agreements, Nørgaard-Højten stated:

Some Lutheran churches remain deficient in Anglican perspective, because they do not have the historic episcopate, and they will only become churches in the true sense if they reintroduce it. If this interpretation is correct, the situation from a Lutheran perspective is serious, since that will imply that something (i.e. the episcopal succession) is made necessary to be church, yet is not necessary for salvation.¹⁷²

The question of what is necessary for the church and to salvation respectively, will be further analysed in Chapter 10.

According to the imperialist understanding of the PCS, the question was how far the Danish church should change itself to solve the Anglican problems with the Danish episcopal office. Several debaters noted that the Danish church had no problem with recognising the Anglican office, yet the Anglicans had a problem with recognising the Danish office.¹⁷³ Kjeldgaard-Pedersen explained further:

All implicated churches have been enriched through the PCS with a new understanding of the continuity in the bishop’s office. But why do we need to

¹⁶⁸ See Aagaard, ‘Porvoo’, p41 who notes this.

¹⁶⁹ Cf. Thomsen, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen skal ikke bagatelliseres’, p21.

¹⁷⁰ Gadegaard, ‘Folkekirke eller bispekirke’, p20.

¹⁷¹ Nørgaard-Højten, ‘Porvoo-Erklæringens forståelse af det historiske episkopat’, p82ff; With referens to Meyer, ‘Some Observations Concerning the Unity Concept of the PCS’, p142f; See also Widmann, ‘Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen’, p128, note 6.

¹⁷² Nørgaard-Højten, ‘Porvoo-Erklæringens forståelse af det historiske episkopat’, p88.

¹⁷³ Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p41; Thomsen, ‘Hvad står det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p9; Thomsen, ‘Forunderlig biskopelig tavshed’; Gautier, ‘Det evangeliske frisind’, p143.

be enriched, we that do not consider episcopal office as necessary to being church, and therefore have no reason to develop ... a theology of the episcopal office, which can only serve to confuse evangelic talk about the word of God, church and the church's office? If the Anglicans would recognise our churchly office, that would be excellent. But, on the other hand, to make it a condition, that we allow ourselves to be enriched by a specific understanding of the bishop's succession, that would be an iniquitous request. If we talk differently about the word, the church and the office than we have done so far, it might only mean that we will speak in unclear and non-evangelic ways, since the Evangelic-Lutheran language about this is already as clear as day, and receives its clarity from the Gospel itself. In that case, the Anglican church can keep its recognition. To make this recognition in any way necessary would be unchristian; however, that is not to say it cannot be practical and desirable between brothers.¹⁷⁴

This argument is contradictory. It is true that the ELCD recognised the Anglican office as a true office, whereas the reverse was not the case before Porvoo. However, the Danish church does not recognise the Anglican ordained ministry as it is understood in the Anglican Church. In other words; the difficulties that the ELCD has in identifying itself as an episcopal church are exactly what they do not recognise about the Anglican bishops, as well as the Swedish, Finnish, and Baltic bishops. When it comes to Porvoo, this is a problem, since the basis for the PCS is the common understanding of the churches involved as episcopal churches, and that this common understanding shapes the basis for a process of mutual recognition. But if this basis is lacking, the basis for recognition of the Danish episcopal ministry, as well as the basis for the PCS, is absent. A variation of this kind of reasoning is when, with reference to the Danish theologian Regin Prenter,¹⁷⁵ it was stated that an ELCD refusal to allow bishops in the succession to participate in ordinations would be to give episcopal succession too much importance.¹⁷⁶ In its essence, that would not be an expression of unity but two different interpretations of the same phenomena.

¹⁷⁴ Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, 'Til de Danske Biskopper!', p42. "...alle implicerede kirker med fællesudtalelsen er blevet beriget med en ny forståelse af kontinuiteten i bispeembedet. Men hvad skal vi i grunden med den berigelse, vi, der ikke betragter bispeembedet som nødvendigt for, at der kan være kirke, og derfor ikke har anledning til at udfolde ... en bispeembedets teologi, som kun kan tjene til at forplumre evangelisk tale om Guds ord, kirken og det kirkelige embede? Hvis anglikanerne vil anerkende det kirkelige embede hos os, er det kun udmærkt. At gøre det til en betingelse, at vi lader os berige med en bestemt forståelse af bispesuccessionen, er derimod et uanstændigt forlangende. Hvis vi skal til at tale anderledes om ordet, kirken og det kirkelige embede, end vi hidtil har gjort, og det kan kun betyde, at vi skal til at tale oklart og oevangelisk, eftersom den evangeliske-lutherske tale herom allerede er klar som dagen og låner sin klarhed fra evangeliet selv, så kan den anglikanske kirke beholde sin anerkendelse. At tillægge denne anerkendelse nogen nødvendighed ville være ukristeligt, hvormed ikke er sagt, at den ikke kan være praktisk og ønskelig mellem brødre."

¹⁷⁵ See Prenter, *Kyrkans Tro*, p216.

¹⁷⁶ Gautier, 'Det evangeliske frisind', p143; Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p21.

3. *The PCS means that the Anglicans have opened themselves to a broader understanding of episcopal succession, while preserving its value:* This interpretation occurred the least in the Danish discussion. A common argument for the third kind of interpretation was that the PCS's ecclesiological understanding emphasises the common priesthood more than the CA does, and that this prepares the ground for the ordained ministry.¹⁷⁷ As Lodberg expressed it: "The crucial new thing in the PCS is that it anchors the theology of office and thereby the discussion about apostolic succession in language about the common priesthood."¹⁷⁸

Several of the debaters in this third group emphasised that the point of departure of the PCS is not the lack of episcopal succession in some of the churches, but the high degree of congruence that already exists between the churches involved and the continuity between the church before and after the Reformation.¹⁷⁹ In their ecclesiological approach to the PCS they meant that, in the same way as in *Niagara*, there is an inner line of development in the PCS: "First 'the apostolicity of the whole church'. Then 'the apostolic ordained ministry', and so, 'the bishop's office in service of the apostolic succession', and finally 'the historic episcopal succession as sign'".¹⁸⁰ This kind of argument was sometimes criticised because, whatever episcopal succession is called, the result of the PCS is the re-introduction of episcopal succession, and the ELCD would become an episcopal church.¹⁸¹ The main difference between those two approaches is that the former group argued that the ELCD was already an episcopal church in continuation with the pre-Reformation church, and that the PCS is based on this conviction – something the latter group denied or ignored.

In general these critiques were closer to a substantial understanding of succession in the PCS than many of the advocates who mainly described the PCS as a practical non-sacramental solution and succession as a symbol. Behind those interpretations were the common ecclesiological understanding and denial of episcopal succession. Related to this discussion is the question about the validity of ordination with or without episcopal succession.

¹⁷⁷ Lodberg, 'Udtalelse til biskopperne ang. Porvoo-erklæringen', p79; Christiansen, 'Velkommen till nadverfejring', p75; Nissen, 'Banebrytande aftale till offentlig debat', p5f; Aagaard, 'Porvoo', p39ff; Uldall Jessen, 'Ja Til Porvoo-Erklæringen Vil Være: Et Synligt Tegn På Kirkens Enhed', p87; Rönnow, 'Porvoo – så man kan forstå det!', p135.

¹⁷⁸ See also Lodberg, 'Udtalelse til biskopperne ang. Porvoo-erklæringen', p79; Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p21f.

¹⁷⁹ Pedersen, 'Porvoodokumentet og bispeembedet', P24ff; Aagaard, 'Porvoo', p39; Gregersen, 'Den alsidige kirken', p23.

¹⁸⁰ Aagaard, 'Porvoo', p44; see also Pedersen, 'Porvoodokumentet og bispeembedet', p24; Gregersen, 'Porvoo-dokumentet', p17.

¹⁸¹ Thomsen, 'Porvoo igen', p40f. Thomsen was criticised by Langhoff, ecumenical secretary to the Bishop of Copenhagen, who asked what the problem was, since the ELCD already had bishops. Langhoff, 'Man skal ikke skyde spurve med kanoner', p32.

5.4.6. Ordination – sacramental or not?

In the Danish discussion, ordination as understood in the PCS was often seen as a sacrament by its critics¹⁸² and not by its supporters.¹⁸³ As with the rejection of episcopal succession, a rejection of ordination as sacrament served as a common basis for the Danish discussion, regardless of attitude. Consequently, many were critical of §48 in the PCS, which states that ordination in episcopal succession is an “effective sign”, i.e. a sacrament. Only a few debaters tried to nudge the discussion in a more ecumenical and sacramental direction. Gregersen stated that the terminology in the PCS means that ordination is a sign but not a sacrament, but that the Porvoo perspective is sacramental in an ecumenical and broader sense.¹⁸⁴ At the same time, he noted – as we have seen – that the “sacramental sounding wording” in PCS §48 was “embarrassing”, but not “constitutive of the church”.¹⁸⁵ Aagaard insisted that, in the PCS, ordination is not made a sacrament; at the same time she described the ecclesiology of Niagara and Porvoo as developing the sacramental ecclesiology of Vatican II.¹⁸⁶ As with episcopal succession, it might be asked whether some of the arguments used should be understood as political rather than as purely theological.

The Danish Porvoo debate reveals a confusion about the meaning of ordination.¹⁸⁷ Gregersen said that at the heart of Lutheran ecclesiology, the issue is not whether a minister is ordained in episcopal succession, but whether the minister is *rite vocatus* by the church.¹⁸⁸ But how can a person be rightly called – including ordination – if he is not called by a ‘true’ bishop? Gregersen did not comment on this, but regarded the bishop as called by his church. But who calls and ordains on behalf of the church? In the Danish Porvoo debate, it was not clear what ordination is meant to be: it seemed to be understood as a liturgical act that is valid no matter who conducts it,¹⁸⁹ in contrast to the Danish church law that requires the bishop – or in exceptional cases the dean on the bishop’s delegation – to ordain.

Few of the debaters discussed the issue of ordination beyond denying that ordination is a sacrament. An exception was Widmann, who stated that “the

¹⁸² Pedersen, ‘Bordeauxfarvet tryksag fra bispekontoret’, p39; Thomsen, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen skal ikke bagatelliseres’, p21; Thomsen, ‘Hvad star det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p12; Nørgaard-Højen, ‘Porvoo-Erklæringens forståelse af det historiske episkopat’, p84; Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p61.

¹⁸³ Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p21f; Aagaard, ‘Porvoo’, p43; Gregersen, ‘Tegnets magt eller magtens tecken’, p53; Langhoff, ‘Man skal ikke skyde spurve med kanoner’, p32.

¹⁸⁴ Gregersen, ‘Porvoo-dokumentet’, p17.

¹⁸⁵ Gregersen, ‘Tegnets magt eller magtens tecken’, p7.

¹⁸⁶ Aagaard, ‘Porvoo’, p41ff.

¹⁸⁷ Raun Iversen, ‘Teologiske og juridiske mellemværender’, p114ff; Raun Iversen, ‘Theological and Liturgical Considerations’, p553ff.

¹⁸⁸ Gregersen, ‘Porvoo-dokumentet’, p16.

¹⁸⁹ Bruun Hjøllund, ‘Ked af den dogmatiske sikkerhed’, p125; Hvidt Breengaard, ‘Teologisk uholdbart syn på summelighed’, p63.

content of ordination is the handing over of the ministry of proclamation, and not any other infusion or transfer of spiritual substance”.¹⁹⁰ This relates to the question whether ordination effects a specific *character* in the ordained minister,¹⁹¹ a question I will treat further in chapter 11.3. There is an inner logic in this argument; if the meaning of ordination is vague or merely a ‘handing over’, it means that episcopal succession and the ordained ministry are of minor importance, or could even be regarded as identical to the common priesthood. Kristian Bruun Høllund stated rhetorically:

We hold it [episcopal succession] as being of minor importance, because of “the missing link” at the Reformation, when Bugenhagen – who himself was not a bishop – ordained our bishops. Thereafter our church has tried, a little illogically, to live up to the principle that bishops ordain bishops. If we want to show that we don’t consider apostolic succession essential, new bishops can be ordained with the laying on of hands by, for example, the oldest member of the church council ... or the oldest parish priest or oldest provost in the diocese instead of a bishop.”¹⁹²

Bruun Høllund’s remark is fair. Why has the ELCD remained episcopal in its order if this is non-essential? And why has the bishop always ordained bishops and priests (even though in recent times there have been exceptions) if this does not mean anything? While those questions indicate a tension in the doctrine of church and ordained ministry in the ELCD, the stress on a functional and non-sacramental perception of those topics operates as both the ground and expression of the minimalist docetic ecclesiology that sees church as primarily invisible.

Important to the continuing discussion is how ordination should be understood. Is it a sacramental or functional act? Related to those questions are the understanding of ordained ministry and its relation to the church as a whole, and its role in the apostolicity and succession of the church.

5.4.7. Ecumenism and the unity of the Church

The Danish understanding of ecumenism and the unity of the church is integrally connected with what has been established so far:

1. The ELCD has a minimalist, docetic and functional ecclesiology that regards the church mainly as invisible.¹⁹³ Based on CA 7, the church is understood as something that *happens* rather than something that *is*. As a consequence, the ELCD is suspicious of order, organisation, structure and concepts that sound sacramental.

¹⁹⁰ Widmann, ‘Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen’, p121.

¹⁹¹ Cf. Christiansen, ‘Indvielse av præster og biskopper’, p4. Christiansen denies the notion of *character indelibilis*, but notes that ordination in the ELCD is for life.

¹⁹² Bruun Høllund, ‘Ked af den dogmatiske sikkerhed’, p125.

¹⁹³ See Chapter 5.4.3 and reference to Edmund Schlink’s description of docetic ecclesiology.

2. Based on this ecclesiology, the unity of the church is primarily seen as invisible and spiritualised, in functional categories (such as cooperation between churches) rather than in *communio* perspective (such as the visible unity of the church).
3. Ecumenical dialogue is understood as a negotiation between churches.¹⁹⁴

Ecumenism as negotiation: An attitude frequently found in the Danish debate about the PCS was that it was interpreted through the regular Danish understanding of church, ministry and apostolicity; and when the PCS did not fit the Danish vocabulary, it was evaluated negatively. Behind this suspicious hermeneutical approach in Denmark there seems to be an understanding of ecumenical work as primarily a diplomatic negotiation rather than a mutual process of *metanoia*. As Gadegaard writes:

How our Lutheran negotiators, Bishop Henrik Christiansen and Principal Gerhard Pedersen, have accepted those formulations that on the whole make ‘succession’ a theological necessity remains a mystery. In reality they have accepted/taken over an episcopal mind-set at the price of Anglican recognition – instead of insisting on the churches’ principally equivalence, since succession by itself lacks importance for the apostolic character of a church.¹⁹⁵

Nørgaard-Højen strongly criticised this view, and stated that ecumenism is a common search for truth to distinguish the true church from the false church.¹⁹⁶ If ecumenical dialogue is understood as negotiation and not as a common search for the revealed truth of Christ, it has consequences for the understanding of the church’s unity. The understanding of ecumenism as a diplomatic negotiation is probably also a vital part of the “cultural gap” between the PCS and Danish public opinion, since it did not recognise in the PCS’s description the church they are used to.¹⁹⁷ However, it is not the intention of the PCS to describe the ecclesial reality of the present ELCD, or any of the other Porvoo churches, but to deepen their understanding and unity in Christ beyond the existing churches. In order to recognise their own church in the ecumenical ecclesiological picture drawn in the PCS, the churches had

¹⁹⁴ E.g. Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p36-113.

¹⁹⁵ Gadegaard, ‘Folkekirke eller bispekirke’, p20. “Hvordan vore lutherske forhandlere biskop Henrik Christiansen og rektor Gerhard Pedersen har kunnet gå med til disse formuleringer og overhovedet at gøre ”succession” til et teologisk nøglebegreb får stå som en gåde. Man har i realiteten accepteret/overtaget en episkopal tænkemåde som prisen for den anglikanske anerkendelse – i stedet for at insistere på kirkernes principielle ligestilling, fordi succession i sig selv er uden betydning for en kirkes apostolske karakter.” See also Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p65.

¹⁹⁶ Nørgaard-Højen, ‘Kirken og kirkerne’, p252.

¹⁹⁷ About the Danish hermeneutic of suspicion see Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p11.

to re-read their own tradition in relation to the deepened ecclesiological understanding of the PCS. Few did this in the Danish debate.

The aim of ecumenism: In the Danish debate it is possible to recognise two main different approaches to the PCS. There were those who wanted the ELCD to reject the PCS, and criticised it as anti-ecumenical, since signing it would create difficulties in relation to the non-episcopal churches in the Leuenberg Fellowship or in the Church of Scotland (which is Reformed).¹⁹⁸ Second, there were those who wanted the ELCD to subscribe to the PCS with certain reservations, and in line with those reservations, also to join the Community of Protestant Churches in Europe (CPCE) based on the Leuenberg Agreement. Consequently, some lamented that the PCS did not include the churches of this Community and the perspective of the Lutheran-Reformed dialogue.¹⁹⁹ The precondition for both those approaches is the same concept of unity as in Leuenberg.

This reasoning indicates that the Danish hesitation to accept the PCS was perhaps not so much about the Lutheran confession as about different ecclesiological interpretations. The PCS's concept of unity became a problem, because it is about a structured and visible unity, and not only about a federation, as in Leuenberg, leaving the churches concerned autonomous.²⁰⁰ It was stated that the ELCD is closer to the protestant churches in Leuenberg than to the Anglican churches.²⁰¹ The Leuenberg Fellowship is an agreement of pulpit and table fellowship between Lutheran, United and Reformed churches. This means that there were confessional differences in Leuenberg that were ignored at the same time that it was stated that the ELCD could not subscribe to the PCS for confessional reasons, since it was not Lutheran. What seems as important is the special Danish character of the church and its close relations with the German protestant churches, rather than their Lutheran confession.²⁰² However, there is a problem with using the confessional mark *Lutheran* in contrast to the other Porvoo churches, since there is no such thing as *the Lutheran church*, and the majority of the Porvoo churches are Lutheran.²⁰³ Several debaters criticised the PCS, since signing it would mean that the churches involved would lose their confessional identity and

¹⁹⁸ Cf. Rasmussen, 'Porvoo igen', p50; Gadegaard, 'Folkekirke eller bispekirke', p20; Thomsen, 'Hvad star det i Porvooerklæringen?', p11; Hvidt Brengaard, 'Porvoo som kirkesplittelse', p44.

¹⁹⁹ Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p17.

²⁰⁰ Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, 'Til de Danske Biskopper!', p42ff.

²⁰¹ Cf. Gadegaard, 'Folkekirke eller bispekirke', p20.

²⁰² Cf. Jørgensen, 'Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo', p12. He notes that in the ELCD it is common to be more strict 'Lutheran' in relation to other churches than in the internal discussions.

²⁰³ Cf. Nørgaard-Højen, 'Porvoo-Erklæringens forståelse af det historiske episkopat', p83.

would become something other than Lutheran or Anglican.²⁰⁴ Kjeldgaard-Pedersen stated that:

An Evangelic-Lutheran church that subscribes to the ‘Porvoo Declaration’, and therewith chapter II-IV in the PCS, leaves its Evangelic-Lutheran foundation and accepts exactly that understanding of church and office that the Reformation was a settlement with.²⁰⁵

With this in mind, it is puzzling that the debate and the ELCD’s formal Porvoo debate treated the PCS as a bi-lateral rather than a multi-lateral dialogue. Apparently the other Lutheran churches did not have the same confessional difficulties as many in the ELCD had and, as some remarked, a Danish assessment of the PCS as ‘non-Lutheran’ would imply a denial that the Nordic-Baltic churches are Lutheran. This relates to the diversity in both the Anglican Communion and in the LWF. The Porvoo perspective is that “all existing denominational traditions are provisional”,²⁰⁶ and does not regard their preservation as an end in itself, but rather the visible unity in the one Church of Christ: a unity that transcends all provisional denominations and confessions through a deeper understanding.

The Danish understanding of the church’s unity: Based on the minimalist docetic ecclesiology, described as a ‘Christianity without a church’, ecclesial unity in Denmark is generally understood in functional and spiritualised (non-material) ways. If the one most important feature of the entire Danish Porvoo debate can be identified, it is this docetic ecclesiology and its spiritualised concept of unity based on a minimalist reading of CA 7, identifying unity with faith or doctrine, but excluding order. In line with this understanding it was stated that, for the ELCD, “signing the Porvoo Declaration is not a precondition for full church fellowship”.²⁰⁷ I will highlight three themes as examples of the consequences of the Danish concept of unity for the Porvoo debate.

A. Unity as cooperation: Since, according to this view, the church does not have a visible body, and in its essence it is invisible, ecumenism becomes a question of doctrinal discussion and practical cooperation if it is to be realised. Most debaters took the PCS to be an agreement about cooperation, not a statement about the one visible and corporate church.²⁰⁸ Debaters who were favourable towards the PCS also often argued this on the basis of

²⁰⁴ Nørgaard-Høj, ‘Kommentarer til Jan Nilssons bemærkninger’, p11; see also Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p10ff, who criticises this kind of confessional protectionism as being against the purpose of the confession, which is to focus on the true gospel, not to dominate the gospel.

²⁰⁵ Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p97.

²⁰⁶ PCS § 22.

²⁰⁷ ELCD, CIR, ‘Response to the Anglican Churches in the Porvoo Communion’, p1; Cf. also Widmann, ‘Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen’, p120.

²⁰⁸ This was also noted by ELCD, the Bishops, ‘Decision about the PCS’, p1.

functional considerations, as it is positive about “global churchly cooperation”;²⁰⁹ but the crucial sacramental basis of the PCS eluded most debaters. Behind this is the Danish scepticism towards the church’s visibility and the Danish desire for independence. Related to this practical understanding is a functional ecclesiology, where the church’s institutional aspect is understood as something negative, non-essential, and non-dogmatic. Many of those who advocated in favour of Porvoo argued that the PCS did not mean the loss of the ELCD’s independence, but was an agreement about cooperation.²¹⁰ Both critics and advocates noted that the PCS is a theological solution with practical consequences that go beyond practical cooperation alone.²¹¹ In his critique of CIR, Nørgaard-Højen noted that:

It has – in general and as a downplaying of the PCS – been claimed that the Folk Church’s joining of Porvoo is merely a question of practical cooperation. That hardly comes up to the mark, since those practical considerations are of course solved in relation to and as a conclusion of that theological unity that is said to be reached. The theological consensus in the Porvoo dialogue is, as in all ecumenical doctrinal conversations, indisputably primary, and the possible practical consequences are just as indisputably secondary.²¹²

B. The ELCD is only a confederation of individual bishops and dioceses: A consequence of the ELCD’s docetic ecclesiology is that the understanding of the unity of the ELCD becomes vague. Expressed differently: if there is no visible unity, how can there be anything like the ELCD – or any church, for that matter? What is the ELCD, and what does it consist of? Some of the debaters argued along this line. Fledelius stated that ELCD is a confederation of dioceses, and can therefore not be subordinated to a bishops’ synod, or to a supranational bishops’ synod or church synod.²¹³ Likewise, Thomsen asked: “What do the words about the bishop as personal, collegial and in communion actually mean?”. The PCS, according to Thomsen, is problematic, since it means that the ELCD must “establish an episcopal collegiality that it has not had so far, and that it has deliberately tried to avoid until now”.²¹⁴ As we have seen, this is the legal understanding of ‘episcopacy’ and ‘diocese’ in the ELCD. The question is: Why it is also stressed that the ELCD cannot establish a formal bishops’ conference or a church synod? This arises especially because there is a continuing constitutional confusion in the ELCD. Thomsen maintained that the amount of authority given the

²⁰⁹ Cf. Ertner Rasmussen, ‘Det positive ved Porvoo’, p59.

²¹⁰ Drejergaard, ‘Ingen fare for folkekirken. Porvoo-samarbejdet er harmløst’; Ertner Rasmussen, ‘Det positive ved Porvoo’, p59; Skov-Jacobsen, ‘Det Skal Holde i Hverdagen’, p148ff.

²¹¹ Thomsen, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen skal ikke bagatelliseres’, p21; Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*, p8; Widmann, ‘Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen’, p116.

²¹² Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*, p8.

²¹³ Fledelius, ‘Porvoo – ja eller nej’, p17.

²¹⁴ Thomsen, ‘Hvad står det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p11; see also Gadegaard, ‘Folkekirke eller bispekirke’, p20.

bishops individually or collectively is a practical consideration, but that it should not be regarded as a theological question.²¹⁵ In contrast, Gregersen stated that, “as being a Lutheran church means that it is ‘one, holy and catholic’, of course its bishops must realise that they have a responsibility that precedes the ELCD.”²¹⁶ This is also what the LWF said in the Lund Statement of 2007.²¹⁷ To this the question must be put: What is the unity of the ELCD, and why should a national border define the unity of the church? Or differently expressed: Is there any such thing as the ELCD apart from individual believers who are organised by the Danish state? If this is the case, why are there such entities as bishops? And, if they are not theologically understood or grounded – as in CA 28 – why does the ELCD have bishops? The answers to these kinds of questions also have consequences for inter-church relationships. It must further be asked: How are theology and functionality understood in the ELCD? Is there no relationship between theology and the practical life of the church? For example, were not many of the decisions of the great councils of the church based not only on theological but also on practical considerations? The relationship between ontology and function in the church will be analysed further in Part III.

C. Mutual participation in bishops’ ordinations: Several debaters suggested that the ELCD should approve the PD, but with reservations.²¹⁸ This was what the CIR and the bishops chose to do in the final motivation for agreeing to the PD in 2009. The PCS §58 *b(vi)*, states: “We commit ourselves to invite one another’s bishops normally to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church.” This was interpreted by many Danes as the ELCD being free *not* to invite bishops from the other churches to participate in the laying on of hands.²¹⁹ But, as Thomsen pointed out, the PCS says that the member churches commit themselves to invite bishops from the other churches.²²⁰ The reservation about the participation of bishops with the episcopal succession in the laying on of hands is, in a narrow sense, a protest against the significance of episcopal succession. In a broader sense it represents another ecclesiology, another concept of unity, in which ordination and mutual participation in the rite are seen as non-essential and non-sacramental. This view differs from the PCS, in which ordination sacramentally effects unity both in space and time, and of which the passing on of ministry is a part. Ordination is a sign, an effective sign, and not mere a symbol of unity.²²¹

²¹⁵ Thomsen, ‘Hvad står det i Porvooerklæringen?’, p11.

²¹⁶ Gregersen, ‘Porvoo-dokumentet’, p17.

²¹⁷ LWF, ‘The Lund Statement’, p9ff, §46, 55.

²¹⁸ Fledelius, ‘Kirkekampen i Danmark’, p159; Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p13, 30ff; Widmann, ‘Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen’, p116ff.

²¹⁹ Fledelius, ‘Kirkekampen i Danmark’, p159f; Gregersen, ‘Porvoo-dokumentet’, p18.

²²⁰ Thomsen, ‘Porvoo-erklæringen skal ikke bagatelliseres’, p21.

²²¹ PCS § 48.

Some debaters noted that there seemed to be a contradiction in the PCS about those churches without episcopal succession and their relationship to the East-Nordic-Baltic churches and the Anglican churches. In case of the East-Nordic-Baltic churches the difference has not been regarded as divisive, whereas in regard to the Anglican churches it has.²²² Nissen asked why the bishops of the Anglican churches should now participate in the Danish bishops' ordinations when the Swedish and Finnish bishops had not previously participated. In this the docetic ecclesiology and the concept of unity are dismantled. Nissen is right that there is an inconsistency in the relationships between the Nordic churches, a "double agenda" in the Nordic relationships that has never been solved. However, the PCS aims for a deeper and realised communion and visible unity than was previously the case. Before the PCS, unity between the Nordic churches was not fully realised, since the bishops from the Eastern-Nordic-Baltic churches were not allowed to participate in the ordinations of Danish and Norwegian bishops, despite their wish to do so. Neither was there any common structure for decision-making. Nissen's question is still relevant, as it asks how the double agenda of the East-Nordic-Baltic churches might be understood, as it regards episcopal succession as a gift from the Holy Spirit, and yet does not regard it in strict sense as necessary for the church. I will come back to this issue in Part III.

5.5. The official ELCD response to the PCS

An investigation of the formal Danish Porvoo debate reveals an intricate mixture of various and often contradictory motives that belong to the realms of theology, history, culture, nationalism, constitutionality, and – not least – church politics and church diplomacy. In a brief information pamphlet entitled *The Folk Church and Porvoo*, published before the signing of the agreement on 3 October 2010, the CIR comprehensively describes the background and the content of the PCS, the Danish process leading to the signing, and the consequences of membership for the ELCD.²²³ The pamphlet is of interest, since it reveals the official understanding of the PCS and how it was communicated to the members of the church. It can also serve as a condensed summary of the reasons for the Danish rejection of the PCS in 1995. Two features of the pamphlet's text are of special interest. First, for the CIR it was vital to demonstrate why an approval of the PD, that was rejected 15 years earlier, was possible in 2010. This was also asked in the reactions to

²²² Nissen, 'Banebrytende aftale till offentlig debat', p5f; Pape, 'Et sprogligt underlødigt dokument', p123.

²²³ ELCD, CIR, *Folkekirken og Porvoo*.

CIR's promulgation of the subscription in December 2009.²²⁴ Second, it was important for CIR to demonstrate that it had the mandate to make the decision on behalf of the ELCD.

The reasons not to join Porvoo 1995 were, *inter alia*, that the English church on that occasion did not recognise female bishops, and consequently neither did it recognise priests ordained by a female bishop. A further concern was the great importance given to the episcopal office in the PCS. This raised a question about whether the other churches in practice recognised the Danish Folk Church with its current church order, which, for example, allows occasional ordinations by a dean in the bishop's absence.

Despite the Folk Church's 'no' to Porvoo in 1995, the Folk Church has participated as an observer from the beginning to the present day. This has in practice meant that the Folk Church has been represented at most Porvoo meetings through the years.

Much has changed, however, since 1995: Today the Anglican churches recognise, for example, ordinations conducted by female bishops or by a dean as the bishop's deputy. In consequence the Folk Church's Council on International Relations decided in 2009 to join the Porvoo Declaration after hearing the bishops in advance concerning the declaration's theological content.²²⁵

This description is political rather than dogmatic, and its content is quite remarkable. The text does sketch a true historical picture of the official Danish decisions and motives for the respective *no* and *yes* to the PCS; but it also goes beyond what was literally written in the 1995 decision, and in accordance with the Danish Porvoo debate. It also makes claims about the other member churches that are clearly unlikely with regard to ordinations conducted by female bishops and deans. In the argumentation these claims function as a motivation for a possible Danish 'yes' to Porvoo; and as such the argument seems to be mainly addressed to the ELCD itself. The pamphlet text was published in Danish and not translated to English. It is possible to

²²⁴ Cf. Thomsen and Laumhage Hansen, *Fønix - Tema: Porvoo-Erklæringen*. The Bishop of Viborg, Karsten Nissen, asked this specifically in the headline of his article *Why no in 1995, but yes in 2010?*: Nissen, 'Hvorfor nej i 1995, men ja i 2010?'

²²⁵ 'Folkekirken_og_Porvoo.Pdf', p4. "Begrundelsen for ikke at tilslutte sig Porvoo i 1995 var bl.a., at Den engelske Kirke på dåværende tidspunkt ikke anerkendte kvindelige biskopper og dermed heller ikke præster ordineret af en kvindelig biskop. Der var endvidere en bekymring over den store betydning som bispeembedet har i Fællesudtalelsen fra Porvoo. Det satte spørgsmålet ved, om de andre kirker rent faktisk anerkendte Den danske Folkekirke med dens eksisterende kirkeordning, som fx indbærer lejlighedsvis ordinationer foretaget af en domprovst i biskoppens fravær. På trods af folkekirkens nej til Porvoo i 1995, har folkekirken deltaget som observatør fra starten til i dag. Det har i praksis betydet, at folkekirken har været repræsenteret ved de fleste møder i Porvoo regi gennem alle årene. Meget har imidlertid ændret sig siden 1995: De anglikanske kirker anerkender fx i dag ordinationer foretaget af kvindelige biskopper eller en domprovst som biskoppens stedfortræder. Disse forhold betød, at Folkekirkens mellemkirkelige Råd 2009 besluttede at tiltræde Porvoo Erklæringen, efter at biskopperne forinden var blevet hørt om det teologiske indhold heri."

notice a position shift in the description compared with the original decision document from 1995,²²⁶ due to the process from 1995 onwards.

5.5.1. The Danish bishops' decision, 1995

The document starts with a short description of the submission of comment and an appreciation of all the efforts that had been made by individuals, parish boards and institutions. An interesting detail is that the Danish word *præster* (which literally means *priest*) is translated as *pastor*, in relation to priests both in the ELCD and in the Anglican churches. The bishops then continue:

1. Despite great variations in the understanding and evaluation of the PCS, there is a positive attitude towards continuing dialogue and cooperation between the churches.
2. Since the consideration process did not receive a reasonably broad acceptance from the members of the Folk Church, the bishops decided to say *no* to the PCS. Still, the bishops wanted to continue to expand the close connections between the Folk Church and the Anglican and Lutheran churches in the Porvoo Communion.
3. Despite the negative decision, the bishops specified that they did not find any “church-dividing differences in the Lutheran and Anglican foundations of faith”.
4. The bishops confirmed that Anglican priests could already serve in the ELCD without re-ordination, and that invited bishops from the Anglican churches could take part in the ordinations of bishops in the Folk Church.
5. The bishops emphasised that, from the Evangelic Lutheran perspective, “episcopal ministry is a pastoral ministry, to which is given a special task of superintendence in relation to congregations and pastors”. (The original Danish text is more specific, and states that the “episcopal office is a priestly office to which is added a special task of oversight in relation to congregations and priests”.)
6. Finally, the bishops underlined that male and female priests and bishops are fully equal in the Danish Folk Church.

As we can see, the issue of female bishops and priests did not play as central a role as it came to have 14 years later in the motivation for the Danish *yes*. In the 1995 decision, the Danish view is stated, but it is not said to be a difference that divides the churches. The issue of the dean as *minister of ordination* is not mentioned at all. Instead it is the massively negative critique of

²²⁶ ELCD, the Bishops, ‘Decision about the PCS’.

the PCS that forced the bishops to give a negative answer to the PCS. At the same time the bishops, having expressed that opinion, succeeded in maintaining the balance by claiming their responsibility for true doctrine, and emphasising that they did not find any “church-dividing differences” between the churches.

In the *Signatory Declaration* of 2009, however, we can recognise the arguments found in the pamphlet *The Folk Church and Porvoo*.²²⁷ In order to produce a positive outcome for the second decision about Porvoo, it was not possible to refer to the negative opinion of 1994-1995. Rather, the second process had to be built on the bishops’ judgment that there were “no church-dividing differences”, and on demonstrating that changes in the Porvoo Communion now made a different decision from the Danish church possible. The decision in 2009 was not taken by the bishops, as in 1995, but by the CIR, which included two bishops, after consulting the bishops about the PCS’s doctrinal content.

Before returning to the CIR decision in 2009, I will describe the relationship between the ELCD and the Anglican Porvoo churches in the period between the two decisions.

5.5.2. Developments after 1995

The Danish rejection of the PD in 1995 was met with disappointment by representatives of the Porvoo churches, but it was noted how reluctant the refusal of the Danish bishops had been and how keen they were to be part as observers in the continuing Porvoo process. Important for the further development was the role of Bishop Kenneth Stevenson (Portsmouth). From 1987 he was the secretary of the *Anglo-Scandinavian Theological Conference*, and later became the first chairman of the CoE’s *Porvoo Panel*,²²⁸ and had, as himself a three-quarters Dane and fluent in Danish, a personal interest in an ELCD approval. In 2002 Stevenson paid an unofficial visit to Bishop Erik Normand Svendsen (Copenhagen), together with some other Anglican colleagues, and discussed Danish concerns.²²⁹ As a response to those concerns and the Danish ‘no’, the CoE’s Council for Christian Unity sent Bishop Normand Svendsen a letter in July 2004 on the behalf of the Anglican Porvoo churches stating:

The door would remain open for the Danish Church to reconsider its position in the future. The church of Denmark has accepted invitations to send ob-

²²⁷ ELCD, CIR, ‘Signatory Declaration PD’.

²²⁸ The CoE’s Porvoo Panel handles issues on behalf of the CoE concerning the Porvoo Communion.

²²⁹ Tustin, ‘The Danish Folk-Church and the CoE’; Tustin, ‘Links with the Church of Denmark’; Tustin, ‘The Danish Folk-Church and the CoE’; Stevenson, ‘Sermon at the Evensong in St Alban’s’.

servers-participants to the main events that have taken place within the Porvoo Churches: the Porvoo Contact Group, the Meeting of Porvoo Primate and Presiding bishops, and the Porvoo Church Leaders Meeting. It continues to support the Anglo-Nordic-Baltic Theological Conference.

Ten years on from 1992, bishops of the Church of Denmark and of the Church of England, together with staff, held informal discussions in Copenhagen in order to review the situation. In the course of these discussions the signatory churches to the Porvoo Agreement were asked to make a substantial response to the Danish bishops' statement of 1995.²³⁰

In its response the Anglicans held out a hand to the Danish church, and emphasised that through the PCS the Anglican Porvoo churches

wished to extend to the Church of Denmark the full ecclesial recognition that is spelt out in the acknowledgments ... [and recognise it as] 'a church belonging to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the apostolic mission and the whole people of God'. They also wished formally to acknowledge the ecclesial authenticity of the ministries of word, sacrament and pastoral oversight of the Church of Denmark.²³¹

The Anglicans further noted that on the issue of female bishops, and priests ordained by them, there was on-going development in the Anglican Communion. They underlined the basic oneness of the church's office of bishop, priest and deacon, and emphasised their wish to continue to explore the nature of the church's ordained ministry together with the Danish bishops. The matter of a dean conducting ordination was not mentioned, just as it had not been mentioned in the Danish decision in 1995.²³²

In May 2005 ELCD sent an answer to the Anglican Porvoo churches.²³³ The document stands in a certain tension to the decision of 1995, as its content is contradictory. Two features are important. First, the document states that the ELCD "has no reservations about full church fellowship with the Anglican churches", including its ministries. At the same time it states that, for the ELCD, "signing the Porvoo Declaration is not a precondition for full church fellowship". Second, the document states – in some contrast to the first quotation – that:

Some of the difficulties for our church in signing still remain. A reconsideration of the formal response from the Danish bishops would become a possibility only if a new situation in the Porvoo Communion should emerge. One area of consideration concerns the recognition of pastors ordained by women bishops and their possibility of serving as pastors in those churches which do

²³⁰ CoE, CCU, 'A Response of the Anglican Porvoo Churches'.

²³¹ Ibid., p1.

²³² Ibid., p2ff.

²³³ ELCD, CIR, 'Response to the Anglican Churches in the Porvoo Communion'. The answer was formulated by presiding bishop Erik Normand Svendsen, bishop Holger Jepsen, chairman Paul Verner Skærved and General Secretary Ane Hjerrild on behalf of the Council on International Relations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark.

not accept those ordained by women bishops. ... [Because of this the CIR and the Danish bishops] established a theological group to clarify the development in the Porvoo Churches since 1995 with special reference to ecclesiology and church ministries. The theological group has been asked to review the different developments in the Porvoo churches in reconsidering the future position of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark.²³⁴

The argumentation lays the basis for an interesting change in the answer from the CIR. Suddenly it is not the content of the PCS that is the issue for the ELCD, but the developments in the Porvoo Communion. This was a powerful argument for those who were critical of a Danish approval. If they were afraid that the ELCD would be changed through agreeing to the PCS, this fear was unfounded, since it was not the ELCD that had changed but the churches of the Porvoo Communion. This further meant that the ecclesiology put forward in the PCS was no longer the reference point for the renewal of the Porvoo churches, but that the ELCD could remain unchallenged.

5.5.3. The Danish Porvoo debate 2005-2009

According to the 2005 answer, the remaining issue for the CIR was to investigate whether there had been any changes in the Porvoo Churches that could motivate it to sign the PCS. A few years later they had reasons to believe so. On 6 January 2009, a meeting of the Danish bishops and the CIR was held to identify a number of subjects that required further explanations before the ELCD could approve the PD. At the meeting it was stated that the ELCD's possible joining of the Porvoo Communion required consensus between the Bishops' Conference and the CIR. Three problem areas were identified; the recognition of female bishops, the insistence on one office of the church, and the recognition of ordinations conducted by a dean, that was now introduced into the discussion. The bishops also identified three subjects that should be documented and elucidated in the on-going process: developments in the Anglican churches that had brought them closer to a Lutheran ecclesiology and understanding of ministry; the practical consequences for the participating Lutheran churches; and what consequences the approval of the PCS would have for the ELCD's other ecumenical relationships.²³⁵ Based on this meeting, the CIR worked out a draft of a signatory declaration, including the subjects identified by the bishops, for further discussions with the Anglican churches. This consultation was held on 15 and 16 September 2009.²³⁶

²³⁴ Ibid. The theological group was established under the leadership of bishop Holger Jepsen, but it did not ever begin its work, and one year later bishop Jepsen became emeritus. Jepsen, 'E-Mail to the Author'.

²³⁵ Nilsson, 'Folkekirken og Porvoo'.

²³⁶ ELCD, CIR, 'Letter to the Danish Bishops with a Draft of the CoD's Signatory Declaration 2009'; See also Drejergaard, 'Letter to Peder Nørgaard-Højen samt øvrige medlemmer af MKR's teologiske arbejdsgruppe 2010-01-11'.

In an account of this meeting, Bishop Karsten Nissen of Viborg noted that since 1995 the Anglican churches had opened the priesthood to women, and that there was an on-going discussion about women bishops. Concerning the dean as *minister of ordination*, Nissen explained that the representatives of the churches had reached a common understanding that “just as the established English church has legislation that requires that a priest shall be ordained by a bishop, we in Denmark have a regulation that enables the dean to deputise for the bishop”.²³⁷ Nissen meant that, if there were any problems concerning ordinations conducted by female bishops or deans, they could be solved collegially in the Porvoo Communion, in line with PD §58 *b(viii)*.²³⁸ The *Signatory Declaration* of 2009 also refers to this paragraph.

Since the representatives of the ELCD had received the desired answers at the meeting with the Anglican churches in September 2009, only a few days later the CIR, in accordance with the agreement between the bishops and the CIR, sent a draft of a signatory declaration to the bishops for their doctrinal judgment.²³⁹ The bishops answered two months later: since they had received the answers they required, and there had been the desired development in the Anglican churches, “the bishops can therefore recommend that the Folk Church fully accede to the Porvoo Declaration. Finally, it should be noted that this is a subscribing to the actual Porvoo Declaration, and not to the entire Porvoo Common Statement”.²⁴⁰

5.5.4. The Signatory Declaration 2009

After the bishops’ affirmative answer, the CIR decided at a meeting on 9 December 2009 to approve the PD on behalf of the ELCD and to send the *Signatory Declaration* to the churches of the Porvoo Communion. In its letter and declaration, the ELCD also set out a few conditions concerning their approval of the Porvoo Declaration.²⁴¹

1. The *Signatory Declaration* starts with an emphasis of the close connection that has always existed between the ELCD and the Anglican churches. And despite the fact that the bishops, because of the consideration process, had to say *no* to the PCS in 1995, they also emphasised that there are “no differences that divide the

²³⁷ Nissen, ‘Hvorfor nej i 1995, men ja i 2010?’, p102.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ ELCD, CIR, ‘Letter to the Danish Bishops with a Draft of the CoD’s Signatory Declaration 2009’; See also Drejergaard, ‘Letter to Peder Nørgaard-Højen samt øvrige medlemmer af MKR’s teologiske arbejdsgruppe 2010-01-11’.

²⁴⁰ ELCD, Drejergaard, ‘Skrivelse fra biskopperne til Det Mellemkirkelige Råd’. “Biskopperne kan derfor anbefale, at folkekirken fuldt ud tilslutter sig Porvoo Erklæringen. Det skal afslutningsvis bemærkes, at det drejer sig om en tilslutning til selve Porvoo Erklæringen og ikke til hele Porvoo Fællesudtalelsen.”

²⁴¹ ELCD, CIR, ‘Signatory Declaration PD’.

ELCD from the other churches”. In this we can recognise the decision from 1995; but then some surprising motives are introduced.

2. The CIR states in the declaration that “the ELCD recognizes without reservation ministers ordained in the Anglican churches, just as bishops from Anglican churches can take part without reservation in consecrations of bishops in the ELCD”.
3. The declaration states further that since the 1995 decision, the ELCD has “officially recognized the other signatory churches as belonging to the One Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church in which the Word of God is authentically preached and the Sacraments duly administered. The ELCD thus recognizes the ordained ministries of the other churches as true apostolic ministries, as expressed in the Porvoo Declaration. Similarly, the ELCD understands itself as being in the same apostolic tradition.”
4. The CIR notes that it was not possible for the ELCD “to sign the Porvoo Declaration because of a number of reservations at the time about the way the Porvoo Communion was expected to develop. There was concern in the church about the lack of recognition of women bishops, as well as concern about whether the churches could maintain their individual character and independence within the Porvoo Communion. Today we note that the Porvoo Communion has not developed as some might have feared in 1995. We note a general move towards the recognition of full admission for men and women to the ordained ministry.”
5. The CIR restated what was said in 1995: that the ELCD recognises both male and female bishops as well as those ordained by them, and that there is only one ministry of the church in the ELCD’s understanding. With reference to the LWF’s Lund Statement from 2007, the declaration also states that the episcopate has “a number of duties that are specifically assigned to them as bishops, namely, the oversight of the church and the ordination of priests”. It is then stated that “in special circumstances the bishop’s duty may be transferred to the dean of the cathedral for a brief, limited period in the absence of the bishop ... [this may also include the authority] to ordain priests”.
6. The CIR establish that “during consultations with representatives of the Anglican churches it has been emphasised that ELCD clergy are fully recognised as ministers, whether they are ordained by a male or a female bishop or by a dean as the bishops’ deputy. In some churches, however, certain legal limitations may apply to appointments due to the law of the land (cf. PD §58 *b(v)*), even though the minister’s ordination is recognised. Such questions will

be discussed and attempts made to solve them under the terms of PD §58 *b(viii)* and *(ix)*.”

7. The declaration emphasises finally the independence of the ELCD, and that the PCS “does not affect the efforts of the ELCD to establish and develop contact with other churches” – especially with regard to the Leuenberg Church Fellowship.

An evaluation of the declaration gives rise to a somewhat ambiguous impression. To make sense, the *Signatory Declaration* needs to be understood more as a political and diplomatic statement than a doctrinal one, and as a statement directed more at the internal situation of the ELCD than at the Porvoo Communion. Overall, it is possible to state that the ELCD received the PCS in *comparative* perspective, but that the *christological* and *pneumatological* approach of the PCS, requiring renewal of the participating churches, passed the ELCD by.²⁴² Together with the minimalist ecclesiology and concept of unity of the ELCD, this determined the Danish reception.

As we can see, all three issues listed by the Bishops’ Conference in January 2009 – the issues about female bishops, ordinations by a dean, and the one *ministerium ecclesiasticum* – are dealt with in the *Signatory declaration*. Surprisingly, the main critical question to the PCS, raised in the discussion of 1994-1995, is not raised here: the issue of episcopal succession and the ELCD’s receiving of it.²⁴³

Below I will list a few topics from this review of the ELCD’s formal Porvoo debate that need to be further analysed. Those are *The Danish Porvoo debate as diplomatic process, contradictions in the ELCD’s formal Porvoo debate, what kind of ecumenical document is the PCS?, the ELCD’s understanding of ecclesiology and unity, the ELCD’s call for independence, the ELCD’s understanding of apostolicity, the ordained ministry – one or three?, the ELCD’s stress on the dean as a possible minister of ordination, and the ELCD’s approval of the PD but not of the PCS.*

The Danish Porvoo debate as diplomatic process: The *content* of the diplomatic process was that the ELCD found difficulties with subscribing that belonged more to the Anglicans than to them. Those difficulties were the ordinations conducted by female bishops and deans that were not focused on, or even mentioned, in the 1995 decision. The *effect* of the diplomatic process was that the ELCD could sign the PD, and on the home front still state that this was possible because the other Porvoo churches had now changed and reconsidered their evaluation of Danish ordinations conducted by female bishops and by deans. The Anglicans could, on their part, be satisfied that the ELCD now had approved the PD, and could focus on the deepening of the Porvoo Communion. One might ask whether it would not have

²⁴² See e.g. Nissen, ‘Hvorfor nej i 1995, men ja i 2010?’, p99ff.

²⁴³ Cf. PCS Foreword §9; see also Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*, p5.

been better to achieve this before the ELCD signed the declaration, since there were so many unclear elements in the ELCD's reception – illustrated not least by their reserved attitude to the PCS and its content.

With this in mind, it is notable that the ELCD, both the bishops and the CIR, stated several times that they had no reservations about full church fellowship with the Anglican and Lutheran Porvoo Churches, even though the ELCD evidently did have reservations. This tension is evidence of its holding a different ecclesiology and concept of unity from that in the PCS. It also raises the question of what constitutes the ELCD's ecclesiological foundations, if it no longer has the national state as the structural and most visible basis of its ecclesiology. Simultaneously, this bond with the Danish state hinders the ELCD in relating to ecumenism and to other churches from a theological perspective. Instead, the ELCD had to deal with questions about the church as a bearer of national and cultural identity, and to deal with a state and with political parties that were guarding their own power and influence in the Danish church and society. Those features are the reasons for treating Porvoo as a diplomatic and church political process, as well as the unwillingness to be theologically confronted with the understanding of apostolicity, episcopacy, and succession in the PCS.²⁴⁴ Behind this behaviour is a comparative approach to ecumenism, rather than the christological and pneumatological approach of the PCS.

Contradictions in the Danish Porvoo debate: In the process after the ELCD's rejection of the PCS in 1995, several different reasons for the ELCD's reservations surfaced that had not been mentioned in the decision document of 1995. In the *Signatory Declaration* of 2009 there are said to have been "a number of reservations at the time about the way the Porvoo Communion was expected to develop. There was concern in the church at the lack of recognition of women bishops, as well as concern as to whether the churches should maintain their individual character and independence within the Porvoo Communion." This is an assertion that goes beyond the formal decision of 1995. These motives were common in the debate, but – with the exception of the issue of female bishops – they were not mentioned in the 1995 decision, and stand in contrast to the bishops' statement that there were no church-dividing differences. The obvious contradiction in the Danish Porvoo debate is why the ELCD had to show that there had been changes in the other churches, thus permitting a *yes* to the PD, since initially there were "no church-dividing differences in the Lutheran and Anglicans foundation of faith", as formulated in the decision of 1995. This statement was even emphasised in the 2005 document, which states that the ELCD "has no reservation about full church fellowship" – and then in the next sen-

²⁴⁴ The PCS was not the only ecumenical document to have been treated in a diplomatic way. This was also true of the Danish Bishops' denial of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic joint declaration about justification by faith in 1999. See Lodberg, 'At i alt bekende Kristus', p66.

tence it contradicts this by saying: “some of the difficulties for our church in signing still remain”. Apparently there were already such difficulties in 1995, and the 2005 document pin-points one such “church-dividing difference”: the issue of female bishops. In the *Signatory Declaration* of 2009 another such difference is identified: the dean as possible *minister of ordination*, which the Anglicans now are said to have accepted. These are differences, but are they church-dividing or not?

The question is what the ELCD really meant by the statement that “there are no church-dividing differences between the Lutheran and the Anglican basis for faith”, since there apparently were such differences, and several of them were “church-dividing differences”. There is a confusion of concepts in this discussion. The Danish statement was made without qualification – if the ordained ministry and episcopal succession are regarded as included in the notion of “basis for faith”. As it seems they are not, but since the Anglicans and some of the Lutheran churches and the PCS do include those, there is a confusion of concepts that needs to be considered. In the decision of 1995 the bishops stated that there are no church-dividing differences, but no doctrinal motivation for why this was the case.

What kind of ecumenical document is the PCS? A feature in the Danish reception of the PCS was that the statement was treated foremost as a bilateral agreement between the ELCD and the Anglican churches. This was obvious both in the discussion and in the process that led to the decision in 2009, even though the differences were as large with the Lutheran churches as those with the Anglicans.²⁴⁵ A possible reason is that the ELCD already had communion with the Nordic-Baltic Lutheran churches. Still, the PCS means a deeper and realised unity beyond what the Nordic and Baltic Churches previously had, and included the Anglican churches. The feature demonstrates a tension between the ELCD’s Lutheran confession and its relations with the other Lutheran Porvoo churches. The ELCD’s difficulty in approving the PD was based on its Lutheran confession, even though at the same time nearly all the other Lutheran Porvoo churches had no problems with subscribing. It is surprising, therefore, that the ELCD’s discussions were not held in meetings with representatives of all the Porvoo churches, but took place bilaterally with the CoE on behalf of the Anglican churches.

This feature is an indication of the ELCD’s ecumenical understanding, as essentially a negotiation over existing differences and similarities – a view held by many of the Danish debaters – while the purpose of the PCS is something different: it is not simply comparative, but is also christological and pneumatological. In the foreword of the PCS it is stated that the Porvoo solution is based not on the question *How far might we go?*, but on a “deeper

²⁴⁵ Cf. Eriksson, Gunner, and Blåder, *Exploring a Heritage*, p43; Ryman, *Nordic Folk Churches*.

understanding” of ecclesiology and apostolic succession.²⁴⁶ In the end the Danish discussion was not about this “deeper understanding” but about whether it was possible to join on its own terms, without challenging its own ecclesiology and independence.

Ecclesiology and concept of unity: Both the ELCD and the Anglican churches reflected upon ecclesiology and unity, but they meant different things. When the ELCD claimed on the one hand that they could not approve the PD, but on the other hand that signing it would not change anything, since the Anglicans could in any case participate in every aspect of the life of the Danish church, this revealed the ELCD’s concept of unity as basically the same as that in the *Leuenberg agreement*.

The concept of unity behind the CIR’s declaration is basically non-material and based on a minimalist interpretation of the *satis est* in CA 7.²⁴⁷ This is also the concept of unity in Leuenberg, which stands in contrast to the organic, corporate and structured unity envisioned in the PCS.²⁴⁸ It is likely that this different perception of unity is the reason for the ELCD’s approval being limited to the PD, rather than to the PCS as a whole. This is probably also the reason that the ELCD considered it possible to be a member of both the Leuenberg Fellowship and the Porvoo Communion.²⁴⁹

In the contradictions within these different concepts of unity, there are hidden premises that the ELCD did not usually consider. The Danish church also assumes an organisation, a canon law, and an ordained ministry with bishops, priests, and an embryonic diaconate, based upon the state as its constituting framework. It is an intriguing fact that in all the other Porvoo churches the canon law discussion is not as comprehensive as in the ELCD, even though at the same time it is stated that the ordained ministry and the church’s organisation are not related to theology or to church unity. That the diocese of the Faeroe Islands does not consider itself to be part of the ELCD suggests something different. The problem with the national state as ecclesiological fundamental is obvious. Although it can give the church financial security, it means that she is not free.²⁵⁰

Independence: The emphasis on the independence of the ELCD in the Signatory Declaration demonstrates that there are tensions between the CIR’s motivation for ELCD’s approval and the content of the PCS. The independence that it stresses is in relation to the other Porvoo churches, not the Danish state. There were concerns in the discussion about the future independence of the ELCD if it joined the Porvoo Communion. This was also raised in the Danish parliamentary hearing that was held after the ELCD’s

²⁴⁶ PCS Foreword § 9.

²⁴⁷ Cf. Jørgensen, ‘Om at læse Porvoo’, p107.

²⁴⁸ PCS §17.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Vium Mikkelsen, ‘Den Danske Folkekirkens deltagelse i Leuenberg’, p44; Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p34.

²⁵⁰ Cf. Gadegaard, ‘Udviklingen i forholdendet mellem kirke og stat’, p234ff.

approval in 2010.²⁵¹ The issue of autonomy is also clear in ELCD's signatory motivation for the Leuenberg Fellowship, which states that the ELCD is not interested in the development of a protestant synodical structure in Europe.²⁵² The perspective in the *Signatory Declaration* of 2009 is a static understanding that does not require any change in the ELCD. The *Signatory Declaration* stands in contrast to the christological and ecumenical approach of the PCS. This static approach to ecumenism, and the Danish call for independence, are probably the reasons that the ELCD signed the Leuenberg Agreement before it was able to agree to the PD, since it did not require any change in the participating churches.²⁵³ This is demonstrated in the instructions of the Danish bishops on 6 January 2009, which emphasised the need to investigate whether the Anglican churches had come any closer to a Lutheran understanding of ecclesiology and the ordained ministry.²⁵⁴

The ELCD's stress on autonomy is in opposition to the intentions of the PCS, which states that the churches have obligations towards the community. It is not unfair to ask what the point is of signing a declaration while at the same time playing down its inherent intentions to develop future structures for common decision-making,²⁵⁵ if this is not done for diplomatic reasons. The difference in the understanding of communion and independence is that the ELCD's remark is based on a focus on jurisdiction and power, while the PCS's concept of unity is based on a realised and visible community with, in, and of the Triune God, i.e. *koinonia*, and its God-given mission in the world. As a result, the Porvoo Communion was seen as a threat to the identity of the ELCD, rather than as allowing it to stand free of the national state and become stronger in a changing Northern Europe.

In defence of the ELCD's representatives, it may be stated that they probably did not have any real opportunity to act differently, since the call for independence was already there in the state church system and in the nationalistic understanding of the Folk Church. They had to take this call for independence into consideration when they discussed a possible Danish approval. Otherwise agreeing to the PCS would have been out of the question. It is important to bear this in mind in order to reach a balanced understanding of the Danish Porvoo debate. The Porvoo process as diplomatic negotiation was not only a fruit of the ELCD's understanding of ecumenism, ecclesiology and unity, but was also probably necessary in relation to the confusion of church and state and the nationalist understanding of the church as primarily Danish and Lutheran.²⁵⁶ How delicate the situation was for the CIR and the

²⁵¹ Folketingets kirkeudvalg, 'Åbent samråd i Kirkeudvalget om Porvoo-erklæringen'.

²⁵² ELCD, CIR, 'Signaturforklaring Leuenberg'.

²⁵³ Vium Mikkelsen, 'Den Danske Folkekirkes deltagelse i Leuenberg', p44.

²⁵⁴ ELCD, Drejergaard, 'Skrivelse fra biskopperne til Det Mellemkirkelige Råd'.

²⁵⁵ Cf. PCS §57-58.

²⁵⁶ Bjerager, 'Ja til Porvoo', p141; Folketingets kirkeudvalg, 'Åbent samråd i Kirkeudvalget om Porvoo-erklæringen'; Wiberg Pedersen, 'Folkekirken', p26; Wiberg Pedersen, 'Hvorfor er

bishops is clear in the discussion of the *Parliamentarian Church Committee* after the ELCD's signing of the PD. In the hearing it was asked how the approval would affect the Evangelic Lutheran confession as regulated in the Danish constitution, Danish independence, and (again) whether the CIR really had the competence to take the decision.²⁵⁷

Recognition of the other churches as apostolic: The *Signatory Declaration* of 2009 states that since 1995 the ELCD had formally recognised the other churches and their ministries as apostolic. The declaration argues in two steps:

1. The qualification of the other churches as apostolic is made as in CA 7 with reference to word and sacrament.
2. The CIR argument is then inverted, in that – since the other churches proclaim the word and administer the sacraments truly – they *thus* have “a true apostolic ordained ministry”. However, this is stated without any qualification about what is required for a ministry to be regarded as “a true apostolic ordained ministry”.

The confusion of concepts is notable in regard to unity, order, ordination, and the Porvoo solution. The decision of 1995 states that bishops from the Anglican churches can participate in the ordinations of Danish bishops, and the 2009 declaration establishes that this participation is even “without reservation”. This is unexpected, since the ELCD had, and still after the signing has, reservations about Porvoo bishops in succession participating in the ordinations of new bishops – i.e., in the laying on of hands – but they are welcome only as visiting guests.²⁵⁸ This refusal by the ELCD is, first, a denial of episcopal succession as well as a statement about itself as fully apostolic – an emphasis that comes later in the *Signatory Declaration*,²⁵⁹ but without any reference to episcopal succession. Second, this reservation means that the ELCD does not embrace the Porvoo solution. Rather, through the PD it merely receives the recognition of the other churches as apostolic, but refuses to accept the obligations that are integral to it.

It is noteworthy that the main Danish objection to the PCS – that the PCS focused too much on episcopacy and succession – did not have any significance in the 1995 decision, nor in the *Signatory Declaration* of 2009. Instead the focus was on the validity of ordinations conducted by women bishops

økumenik så svær i Danmark?’, p273ff; Vium Mikkelsen, ‘Den Danske Folkekirkens deltagelse i Leuenberg’, p45; Langdahl, ‘Porvoo opmuntrende og inspirerende – de danske såkaldt kirkelige retninger har idag fået et sekterisk præg’, p89; Schall Holberg, ‘Porvoo, en mellemkirkelig provokation?’, p147.

²⁵⁷ Folketingets kirkeudvalg, ‘Åbent samråd i Kirkeudvalget om Porvoo-erklæringen’.

²⁵⁸ Raun Iversen, ‘Teologiske og juridiske mellemværender’, p120.

²⁵⁹ Cf. Thomsen, ‘Forunderlig biskopelig tavshed’; Nilsson, ‘Bemærkninger til Peder Nørgaard-Højen’, p2.

and deans; and it is stated that the Anglican churches had changed and now allegedly recognised the Danish “ministers whether they are ordained by a male or a female bishop or by a dean as the bishop’s deputy”. The Danish emphasis on the dean as *minister of ordination* can be understood as an indirect protest against the importance that episcopacy and succession are given in the PCS. Thomsen argues in a 1994 article that an ordination conducted by a dean is a test of the importance of episcopal succession.²⁶⁰ This argument was repeated by CIR’s Jan Nilson in 2010,²⁶¹ as an answer to Nørgaard-Højen’s critique of the absence in the *Signatory Declaration* of 2009 of an analysis of episcopal succession.²⁶²

What they mean is this: If the other Porvoo churches recognise persons ordained by a dean as priests, they have proved that they really have abandoned episcopal succession as necessary for the church – in which case the ELCD can sign the PD. The Danish argument demonstrates that the Porvoo solution was never subjected to a profound analysis in the Danish discussion, but rather was stuck in a mechanistic pipeline interpretation of episcopal succession. Instead of the deeper understanding spelled out in the PCS, the Danish process was governed by its denial of a pipeline understanding. The ELCD’s action is contradictory: on the one hand the signing was motivated by the claimed Anglican abandonment of their traditional understanding of episcopal succession, one that the ELCD could not accept. This is not found in the official documents, but in the comments on them.²⁶³ On the other hand, the ELCD does not allow bishops from the other churches to participate in the ordinations of new Danish bishops, as if she does not really trust that the other churches have abandoned their support for episcopal succession. Thomsen and Nilson could be right, that a recognition of presbyteral ordination would mean a denial of the importance of episcopal succession; but it should still be asked why the ELCD chose to hide the question of episcopal succession behind the possibility of presbyteral ordination. A possible answer is that through this, the process was changed from a reactive Danish position on episcopal succession, to one in which the Anglicans – not the Danes – had to react to the issue of presbyteral ordination. Consciously or not, the consequence was that the ecumenical dialogue was changed into a diplomatic negotiation about how far the ELCD and the Anglicans could go.

Contrary to the Danish claim, the Anglican evaluation of the ordained ministry in the ELCD did not change between 1994 and 2009. As already stated in PCS §52-54, the Anglican churches recognised the ELCD and its

²⁶⁰ Thomsen, ‘Porvoo igen’, p42.

²⁶¹ Nilsson, ‘Bemærkninger til Peder Nørgaard-Højen’, p2.

²⁶² Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*, p23.

²⁶³ Cf. Nilsson, ‘Bemærkninger til Peder Nørgaard-Højen’, p2. It was also a common interpretation in the Porvoo debate that the Anglicans had now changed, and no longer regarded historic succession as necessary, but only as simply an outward sign – an interpretation that is not accurate, as PCS §48, for example, shows.

episcopal ministry as apostolically authentic. This was reaffirmed in the Anglican letter to the Danish bishops in July 2004. However, this does not mean that the Anglican churches no longer emphasised episcopal succession as necessary, as Meissen, Reuilly, and ARCIC show. Behind this confusion lie different interpretations of the Porvoo solution, different ecclesiologies and concepts of unity. From the Anglican side, the recognition of the Danish office was made on the basis of the unity established through the churches' mutual understanding of ecclesiology, episcopacy and apostolic succession. On that basis the PCS declares that "the time has come when all our churches can affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession (IV D)".²⁶⁴

The PCS is focused on future visible and organised unity, rather than on history and its divisions. The Danish interpretation, by contrast, is focused on history and existing divisions, and states that since the Anglican churches have recognised the ELCD and its ordained ministry as apostolic, the churches can remain as they are because the Anglicans allegedly no longer regard episcopal succession as substantial but merely as an outward sign.²⁶⁵ The Porvoo solution aims to hold together churches affected by different historical circumstances and to unite them through a process of restoring the organic unity that once was in the corporate and material unity of Christ. According to the PCS, this is accomplished through a deeper understanding of apostolic succession in order to free the churches from "limited and negative perceptions".²⁶⁶ It does not mean an emptying of those concepts. In fact, the radical claim of the PCS is reduced to nothing by the Danish interpretation, and to an inter-church courtesy without any real consequence. That is not the content of the PCS.²⁶⁷ The Danish discussion rejected episcopal succession as an isolated pipeline; but there were few attempts to interpret episcopal succession in an ecclesiologically-integrated way. From a human and historical perspective, the Danish reluctance over episcopal succession is understandable, since that might question the theological validity of its own church. However, the PCS aims higher.

Ordained ministry – one or three?: Despite the Danish focus on change in the Porvoo Communion and the question whether the Anglican churches had come closer to a Lutheran understanding, it is possible to observe a development in the Danish understanding of office from the 1995 decision to the *Signatory Declaration* in 2009. The 1995 decision states that "the episcopal ministry is a pastoral ministry, to which is conferred a special task of superintendence in relation to congregations and pastors". (In Danish it is stated that the episcopal office is a priestly office.) Basically this is repeated in the

²⁶⁴ PCS §57.

²⁶⁵ Nilsson, 'Bemærkninger til Peder Nørgaard-Højen', p2; Cf. also Jørgensen, 'Om at læse Porvoo', p107.

²⁶⁶ PCS Foreword §9.

²⁶⁷ PCS Foreword.

2009 declaration, but there is a development in emphasis that, with reference to the LWF Lund statement from 2007, comes closer to a threefold ministry than earlier. The ELCD states in the 2009 declaration:

There is only one ministry (*ministerium ecclesiasticum*), to which both the priesthood and the episcopate belong. The episcopate is understood in a Lutheran context as a distinct form of the one pastoral office (cf. “The Lund statement” art. 45, the Lutheran World Federation, 2007). However, bishops in the ELCD have a number of duties that are specifically assigned to them as bishops, namely, the oversight of the church and the ordination of priests. Bishops in the ELCD are installed at a specific service of consecration which includes the laying on of hands by the presiding bishop and other attending bishops.²⁶⁸

It should be noted that the Danish text does not speak of the bishops’ installation but that bishops are ‘ordained’ (*vies*). Considering both the discussion of 1994-1995 and the decision of 1995, there is a development in the 2009 declaration describing the episcopal office as “a distinct form in the one ecclesiastical ministry”.²⁶⁹ The understanding of the church’s ordained ministry in this wording is close to the PCS’s description of one ecclesiastical ministry with three forms – although the ELCD so far has only two forms – priests and bishops – while an ordained diaconate has not been developed.²⁷⁰ Related to the question about ordained ministry as one or three is the understanding of ordination. The ordination practice in the ELCD indicates a two-fold *ministerium ecclesiasticum* asking God to “create and equip” the ordinands for their ministry. As Raun Iversen has shown, this practice stands in a certain tension with the legal regulations and the common Danish emphasis that there is only one *ministerium ecclesiasticum*, and that there is no difference between priest and bishop except with respect to jurisdiction.²⁷¹

The dean as possible minister of ordination: The issue of the dean as possible *minister of ordination* was not mentioned in the formal Danish statements before the consultation between the Bishops and the CIR in January 2009, even though it was part of the public discussion in 1994-1995. Three things might be said about this issue. First: the claim of the *Signatory Declaration* that the Anglican churches now fully recognised ELCD clergy as ministers “whether they are ordained by a male or a female bishop or by a dean as the bishop’s deputy” is dubious. There was no such change as claimed.²⁷² The CoE did not recognise in 2010 priests ordained by female

²⁶⁸ ELCD, CIR, ‘Signatory Declaration PD’, p2.

²⁶⁹ LWF, ‘The Lund Statement’, § 45.

²⁷⁰ Pädam, ‘Towards a Common Understanding of Diaconal Ministry?’

²⁷¹ Raun Iversen, ‘Teologiske og juridiske mellemværender’, p122ff.

²⁷² There are no indications that the CoE has changed what they wrote in 1994 as a comment on PCS §58b (v) in CoE, CCU, *The Porvoo Declaration*, p18. “This commitment applies only to deacons, priests and bishops who have been ordained by a bishop. It would not apply to the small number of Nordic clergy who have in the past been ordained by a cathedral dean. Nei-

bishops, even though there was a process in the CoE towards the recognition of women bishops. Ordination conducted by a dean is out of question in most, and not legally possible in any, of the other Porvoo churches. With the exception of the CoN, where this was legally possible until 2006.²⁷³ So how is this Danish claim in the *Signatory Declaration* to be understood?

Jan Nilsson, who at the time was theological consultant to CIR and who participated in the Danish-Anglican meeting in September 2009, said that the Anglicans assured the Danish representatives that, despite certain legal restrictions on persons ordained by a presbyter, the validity of the ordination was not questioned.²⁷⁴ This view was supported by Bishop Nissen, who said of the meeting with the Anglican bishops:

We reached the conclusion; as the English established church has a law which states that a priest shall be ordained by a bishop, we in Denmark have a regulation that makes the dean the bishop's deputy. As equally legitimate member churches, the Porvoo Communion has to recognise and accept those laws and rules that apply to the individual country. ... The bishops of the ELCD do not wish to change the praxis that deans can ordain when the bishop of the diocese cannot do so. No requirement will be made for any re-ordination of a Danish priest ordained by a dean, who applies for a priestly position in any of the Anglican member churches of the Porvoo communion. Were there still to be any problem, they could be solved through a collegial consultation in terms of PD *b(viii)*.²⁷⁵

According to Nissen, the result of the meeting seems to be about church law rather than doctrine.²⁷⁶ Apparently the participants were satisfied with the result of the meeting, which opened the way for a Danish approval. It is not theologically satisfactory when a doctrinal question – such as whether the dean can ordain or not – is turned in to a legal question. In the end the

ther would it apply to any who might have been ordained in a church to which the Measure does not apply but who have subsequently been accepted without re-ordination into the ministry of one of the participating churches.” Cf. also Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p127.

²⁷³ See e.g. LRCDSF, *Justification in the Life of the Church*, p84, §239. Both the ELCF and the CoN had this exceptional possibility in their church laws before they signed the PCS in 1996. It was extremely rarely used in the ELCF, and seldom in the CoN. The ELCF changed their church law on this matter when they joined the Porvoo Communion, and the CoN removed this option from their church law in 2006. This was done with the explanation that it was not a negative judgement on those previously so ordained. See CoN, *Norske kirkens Kirkeråd*, ‘Protokoll - KR 44/06 Oslo, 13.-15.’, § 5:6; and CoN, *Norske kirkens Bispemøte*, ‘Protokoll - Oslo 29. september – 4. oktober 2005’, p4-6. In the ELCI it was possible for the dean to ordain from 1746 until the second half of the 19th century. Since the ELCI instituted the system of having more than one bishop in order to avoid being without one, presbyteral ordinations have not been practised for more than 100 years, and it is not possible in terms of present church law. The bishop of Iceland also ordains the ministers in three of the four Lutheran free churches in that country.

²⁷⁴ Nilsson, ‘Bemærkninger til Peder Nørgaard-Højen’, p2f.

²⁷⁵ See e.g. Nissen, ‘Hvorfor nej i 1995, men ja i 2010?’, p99ff.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p102.

churches involved were ‘saved’ by PCS §58 *b(v)*, which states that priests from other churches in the Porvoo Communion are always received “in accordance with any regulations which may from time to time be in force”. This paragraph also stipulates that the PD applies to persons *episcopally ordained*. The Porvoo Communion thus does not include persons *prebyterally ordained*.²⁷⁷

The issue reveals differences between the Danish and Anglican members. The representatives of the ELCD could feel satisfied that the validity of priests ordained by a dean had allegedly been recognised by the CoE. The Anglicans could feel satisfied that their interests were secured in any event by the regulation of PD §58 *b(v)* and that the ELCD now finally signed the PD. How shall this be understood? On the one hand it is said that the value of the ministers presbyterally ordained is not denied, on the other hand it is stated that those presbyterally ordained are not allowed to serve in the CoE. According to the ELCD the Anglican recognition was due to a changed perception of the CoE since the Oslo meeting in 1951. That is, however, not the case. The CoE’s approach is the same as in Meissen, in which the CoE recognises the ordained ministry of the churches of the EKD. At the same time those ministers are not allowed to minister in the CoE, because they are not episcopally ordained. While this approach might seem to be contradictory, it is an expression of a changed ecclesiological perspective since the mediaeval time and mirrors the CoE’s approach during the 20th century towards churches not episcopally ordered. The issue is expressed by the Lambeth Conference of 1920:

It is not that we call in question for a moment the spiritual reality of the ministries of those Communions which do not possess the episcopate. On the contrary we thankfully acknowledge that these ministries have been manifestly blessed and owned by the Holy Spirit as effective means of grace. But we submit that considerations alike of history and of present experience justify the claim which we make on behalf of the episcopate. Moreover, we would urge that it is now and will prove to be in the future the best instrument for maintaining the unity and continuity of the Church.²⁷⁸

As we shall see, this Anglican approach towards the ordained ministry in EKD was perceived as a contradiction in the international Porvoo debate. I shall return to this issue in chapter 14. The complex issue was not explained

²⁷⁷ Cf. also Nørgaard-Højen, ‘Kommentarer til Jan Nilssons bemærkninger’, p6f who also interprets the process in this way. The issue was clarified already in 1998 in a comment by Church Lawyers of the Porvoo Communion stating: “The commitment only covers those who have been ordained by a bishop of one of the signatory churches. Churches are not obliged to accept for service those who are ordained by a cathedral dean or those who were ordained in a church which is not a signatory but were subsequently accepted for ministry in a signatory church without re-ordination.” Quoted from Meeting of the Church Lawyers of the Porvoo Communion, ‘Commentary on the Porvoo Declaration’, p385.

²⁷⁸ Lambeth Conference, ‘Resolution 9, ‘Appeal to All Christian People’, 1920’, p47.

to the Danish public by Nilsson or Bishop Nissen: they stated only that the validity was not in question, and that the issue would be handled through the legislation of the churches in the Porvoo Communion.

Secondly: as it seems the ELCD does not consider an ordination by a dean to be *presbyteral*, since the dean ordains as the bishop's deputy – in other words, with the bishop's authority. At least, the *Signatory Declaration* can be interpreted in these terms. This kind of argument occurs sometimes among RC theologians about priests who were presbyterally ordained by abbots in the mediaeval period, conducted on delegation from the Pope.²⁷⁹ The validity of those presbyterally ordained has never been questioned. Behind this practice was the mediaeval presbyteral conception of ordained ministry, in which the bishop was understood to be merely a priest with special jurisdiction. That was the dominant understanding in the ELCD, even though it is possible to identify a development on this issue in the *Signatory Declaration* of 2009. A difference is that the mediaeval downplaying of episcopacy contributed to seeing its *potestas* as simply derived from the Pope, which at the same time was an expression of the mediaeval high-ideology of the Pope and of his spiritual and worldly power. In the Danish discussion it was commonly held that there is no difference between priest and bishop other than jurisdiction; and since the jurisdiction is delegated from the bishop to the dean, the ordination is not understood as presbyteral. Nevertheless, the ordination must be regarded as presbyteral, since it is conducted by a priest and not by a bishop. As we have seen, the presbyteral conception of ordained ministry stands in tension with the understanding of episcopacy in the *Declaration* of 2009, as well with the history of the ELCD.

If there is no difference between bishop and priest, it must be asked why the bishops of the ELCD are ordained and are not only given their jurisdiction on paper. In the preparations for a new Danish ordinal in 1987 it was contended that such a view contradicted Danish tradition and church law, and that “it is ordination that makes a person a priest”. In the same way it was stated that the episcopal office is not only about administration but is a “distinct pastoral commission” in the one office that includes the passing on of the ministry in ordination, as in the ordination of a priest.²⁸⁰ In Denmark this view of ordination is not unchallenged.²⁸¹

In practice the *dean as minister of ordination* is not the only form of presbyteral ordination in the ELCD. In the Porvoo Communion there seems to

²⁷⁹ See Denzinger, *DzH*. Pope Bonifatius IX, Bulla *Sacrae religionis*, 1 Feb. 1400, *De ambitu potestatis ordinis in simplici sacerdote*, in; DzH 1145. And Pope Martinus V, Bulla *Gerentes as vos*, ad abbatem monasterii Cisterciensis Alzelle in Saxonia, 16 Nov. 1427, *De ambitu potestatis ordinis in simplici sacerdote*, in; DzH 1290.

²⁸⁰ Christiansen, ‘Indvielse av præster og biskopper’, p6, 10f.

²⁸¹ Raun Iversen, ‘Teologiske og juridiske mellemværender’, p113ff; Raun Iversen, ‘Hvad kommunikeres der ved ordinationer efter folkekirkens 1987-ritualer?’, p18ff; Busch Nielsen et al., *Folkekirkens embeder*, p15ff.

have been no discussion of the Danish custom of presbyteral ordination in the ‘free-congregations’ (*frimenigheder*). These are parishes that do not fall under the state, but are still regarded as part of the ELCD; and they have the right, with the bishop’s approval, to use the local parish church for their services. In those congregations the practice of ordination has been presbyteral since it emerged in the 1870s, even though there has been the development since the 1930s that the ELCD’s bishops conduct the ordinations of priests for some of the ‘free-congregations’. Those who are presbyterally ordained for service in those ‘free-congregations’ are accepted as priests without re-ordination when they apply for a position in an ELCD parish.²⁸² This matter was not a part of the Danish discussion with the CoE.

Thirdly: in the light of Danish church history, the ELCD’s stress on the dean as a possible *minister of ordination* as the bishop’s deputy is surprising, because the regulation that has made this legally possible is not old. It is actually very new. The first time that Danish church law made this practice possible was as recently as 1960. The new law stated that the only person who can ordain in the ELCD is the bishop, but in the event of the bishop’s absence the dean may do so on the bishop’s behalf, as an exception. The section states that, if anyone else conducts an ordination, that person commits a crime (a regulation that goes back to the church’s ritual of 1685).²⁸³ In 1992, during the Porvoo Conversations, the Danish representatives Gerhard Pedersen and Bishop Henrik Christiansen sent an enquiry to the Bishop of Copenhagen about the dean as possible *minister of ordination*. The bishops answered that “only in *casu necessitas*” could persons other than a bishop ordain.²⁸⁴ This statement stands in contrast to the church law of 1683 that stated that only the bishops can conduct the ordination of a priest, and that the bishop of Copenhagen ordains bishops.²⁸⁵ Given this short history, it is puzzling that the dean as *minister of ordination* was made a matter of church identity – almost a confessional mark. The ELCF and the CoN, after their approval of the PD, chose another way to regulate a practice that legally had been possible only as a brief parenthesis in their churches’ history. As described earlier, a reason could be that the dean as *minister of ordination* served as an implicit emphasising of the Danish denial of episcopal succession.

Approval of the PD, but not the PCS: In the bishops’ answer to the CIR’s draft of the *Signatory Declaration* it was emphasised that “the bishops can therefore recommend that the Folk Church fully accede to the Porvoo Declaration. Finally, it should be noted that this is a subscribing to the actual

²⁸² Jørgensen, ‘Hva nøtt er et te?’, p35ff.

²⁸³ Ibid., p35; Pedersen, ‘Porvoodokumentet og bispeembedet’, p29.

²⁸⁴ Pedersen, ‘Porvoodokumentet og bispeembedet’, p29. Quotation from a letter from the Bishops of the ELCD to Bishop Christiansen and Gerhard Pedersen.

²⁸⁵ Raun Iversen, ‘Teologiske og juridiske mellemværender’, p118.

Porvoo Declaration, and not to the entire Porvoo Common Statement”.²⁸⁶ The restriction was criticised by Nørgaard-Højen, who argued that the PCS and the PD belonged together as *premise* and *consequence*.²⁸⁷ In his answer to Nørgaard-Højen, the CIR’s Jan Nilsson explained that the reservation should be understood as the PD being “like a legal text that shall be read on basis of comments to the legislative proposal [i.e. the PCS as whole] – still it is only the actual law which has legal effect”.²⁸⁸ It is true that what the churches subscribe to when they join the Porvoo Communion is the PD. However, the Porvoo Declaration starts with a statement that points directly back to the PCS as a whole:

[We] on the basis of our common understanding of the nature and purpose of the Church, fundamental agreement in faith and our agreement on episcopacy in the service of the apostolicity of the Church, contained in Chapters II-IV of the Porvoo Common Statement, make the following acknowledgments and commitments: ... [Followed by the declaration; my emphasis].²⁸⁹

The ELCD’s interpretation that they could sign only the PD but not the PCS as a whole contradicts the declaration they had signed, since the declaration points back to, and is presupposed by, the PCS as a whole. To separate the two is a contradiction in terms. Yet the ELCD adopts this position, and claims that it was supported by the Anglican churches. Whether this separation was accepted by the other Porvoo Churches as well is not stated. The Danish conditional approval of the PD indicates a deficiency in how the Porvoo Communion functions in practice and the lack of a joint decision making body. Given that the ELCD approved the PD conditionally, it had been reasonable that the Porvoo Communion as a whole had discussed the possibility of such a conditioned approval.²⁹⁰ That was however not the case.

The Danish separation of the PD from the PCS is not without consequences; and the ELCD has accomplished two things by doing so. First, it has in fact contradicted its own evaluation that there are no church-dividing differences between the churches involved in the Porvoo Communion. Since all the other churches have approved the PD based on the PCS as a whole, the ELCD apparently has reservations about the other churches. Second, what happened is that the ELCD has created two kinds of membership in the Porvoo Communion: those who have received the PCS as a whole, and those who have signed just the PD but opposed its ecclesiological prerequisites in

²⁸⁶ ELCD, Drejergaard, ‘Skrivelse fra biskopperne til Det Mellemkirkelige Råd’. Also stated by the CoN, see Sannes, ‘Karakteristikk og vurdering av “Porvoo-erklæringen”’, p85.

²⁸⁷ Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*, note 6 p6-7, note 8 p8; see also Højlund, ‘Fællesudtalelsen fra Porvoo – en præsentation’, p8; Kjeldgaard-Pedersen, ‘Til de Danske Biskopper!’, p37.

²⁸⁸ Nilsson, ‘Bemærkninger til Peder Nørgaard-Højen’, p1. The same interpretation is represented by Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p13.

²⁸⁹ PCS §58.

²⁹⁰ I will come back to this structural deficiency of the Porvoo Communion in Chapter 16.

the PCS. The concrete result of her conditional membership is the provincial conduct of bishop's ordinations in the ELCD without the participation of bishops from the Porvoo Communion. At the same time this corresponds with the Danish call for independence – a call that does not sit comfortably with the idea of visible unity and sacramental church communion. It is likely that this is the reason for the ELCD's approval of just the PD and its reservations about the PCS as a whole, since the PCS focuses on ecclesiology and episcopacy, and states in §57 that "in the light of all this we find that the time has come when all our churches can affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession". It appears that the ELCD was not ready to do so.

5.5.5. Reactions to the ELCD's approval of the PD

The announcement of the CIR's decision to subscribe to the PD was met with surprise in Denmark. Despite this there was not much debate after the decision, and most of it focused on the fact that the decision was taken without any real publicity. Only a small part of the discussion concerned the content of the PCS. Nørgaard-Højen wrote a letter to the bishops, the CIR, and the theological working group of CIR, which included an essay of more than 30 pages about the PCS, and questioned the decision's compatibility with the ELCD's confession and its membership in the Leuenberg Fellowship.²⁹¹ It is likely that his initiative was a product of his membership of the CIR's theological working group, which had not been involved in the negotiations with the CoE or with the decision. As part of the public reaction the journal *Fønix* published a special edition in which different contributors gave their views on the decision.²⁹² From the politicians came a severe critique of the approval, which they thought threatened the identity of the ELCD as declared in the constitution of 1849 and as an independent national church.²⁹³

The formal ELCD discussion of Porvoo was a process in which the decision-makers of the ELCD, aware of their own weak formal position, had to work with diplomatic sensitivity in the midst of many contradictory forces in their own church. This diplomacy had to deal with the tension between the need of the ELCD to be ecumenically involved, and those various groups of politicians and revival movements on the home front who primarily wanted to preserve the church as Danish and Lutheran over against the Anglican and Lutheran Porvoo churches. In this perspective it is hardly surprising that the representatives of the ELCD focused on the Anglican churches, since it made it possible to emphasise their differences and the need for change in

²⁹¹ Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*.

²⁹² Thomsen and Laumhage Hansen, *Fønix - Tema: Porvoo-Erklæringen*.

²⁹³ Folketingets kirkeudvalg, 'Åbent samråd i Kirkeudvalget om Porvoo-erklæringen'; Schall Holberg, 'Porvoo, en mellemkirkelig provokation?', p145ff.

the other party. In the end the ELCD approved the PD, motivated by alleged changes in the other Porvoo Churches about women bishops, the dean as *minister of ordination*, and the preserved independence of the ELCD. The main objection emerging from the debate of 1994-1995, and the radical claim of the PCS about apostolic succession, did not play any vital role in the process. It is possible that the Danish emphasis on the dean as *minister of ordination* in practice served as a substitute for this lack. Altogether this strengthens my assessment of the formal Danish process as first and foremost a diplomatic handling of the matter. If the focus had been on the question of episcopal succession, it is most likely that the ELCD would not have been able to sign the declaration.

It is noteworthy that the bishops never reasoned their decision to approve the PD theologically. In the political hearing in the *Parliamentary Church Committee* it was specifically stated that signing the PD was not allowed to change the ELCD, nor affect her independence; and under no circumstances would episcopal succession be permitted to be introduced in the ELCD.²⁹⁴ Paradoxically, this means that episcopal succession was regarded as significant for the Danish Parliamentary Church Committee. Consequently, the Danish ordinal specifies that no bishops other than the presiding bishop of Copenhagen and the two neighbouring bishops are allowed to participate in the ordinations of new bishops in the ELCD. Behind these claims and actions lie divergent ecclesiologies and understandings of ecumenism and unity that seem to be more or less unconscious in the Danish context. There seems to be no understanding that preventing Porvoo bishops from participating in the ordinations of new Danish bishops means, from a sacramental point of view, that the ELCD remains outside the actual Porvoo Communion.

This assessment is strengthened by the correspondence between Bishop Drejergaard and Nørgaard-Højen. With reference to Thomsen,²⁹⁵ editor of *Fønix*, who in a critical article in *Kristeligt Dagblad* accused the bishops and the CIR of pragmatism in their decision about the PD, Drejergaard noted that he saw this as a positive thing. According to the bishop, it was entirely impractical for the ELCD to remain outside the Porvoo Communion; and since the bishops' questions had been answered by the Anglicans, there was no reason to remain outside the communion. Again, there is no reference to apostolicity or episcopal succession. Later in the letter, Drejergaard notes that Nørgaard-Højen's reference to Meissen raised concerns for him about

²⁹⁴ Folketingets kirkeudvalg, 'Åbent samråd i Kirkeudvalget om Porvoo-erklæringen'. See also Fledelius, 'Kirkekampen i Danmark', p159. Fledelius lists nine points that he says the ELCD should set as conditions for signing. The article was written in spring 1995, but it corresponds well with the final condition of the ELCD in 2010. Cf. Meeting of the Church Lawyers of the Porvoo Communion, 'Commentary on the Porvoo Declaration', p387.

²⁹⁵ Thomsen, 'Forunderlig biskopelig tavshed'. The bishop answered Thomsen one week later; Drejergaard, 'Ingen fare for folkekirken. Porvoo-samarbejdet er harmløst'.

the Anglican understanding of episcopal succession and its compatibility with the ELCD.²⁹⁶ It might be asked whether this remark was also pragmatic diplomacy, considering that it had already been noted in the 1994-1995 discussions that, in Meissen, episcopal succession is an Anglican requirement for unity.²⁹⁷

The forceful rejection of the PCS in Denmark has to be seen in the light of the complex Danish context, in which a wide range of ecclesiological approaches contend with one another. The common element in the Danish ecclesiological picture is that the church is seen primarily as invisible, based on a reductive or minimalist interpretation of CA 7, with consequences for the ELCD's understanding of unity and ecumenism. This ecclesiology is the same as in Leuenberg: seeing the one church primarily as a fellowship of worship, rather than as a united visible church. At the same time this minimalist ecclesiology fits the ELCD well, since it does not challenge the ELCD's close connection with the Danish nation and the nation-state; nor does it challenge the call for independence. However, this call for independence is used as an argument against ecumenism and other churches, not against the Danish state-church system. The minimalist ecclesiology, and the absence of an ecclesiological debate and analysis beyond a repetition of the Danish Lutheran context, are obvious in the Danish Porvoo debate as a result of little or no ecclesiological consideration of the PCS. Because of this absence the Porvoo solution eluded most of its debaters. Instead the solution is understood as an attempt to smuggle episcopal succession into the Folk Church – or as an Anglican abandonment of their traditional stress on episcopal succession. Both of those interpretations miss the fact that the Porvoo solution is based upon a common Lutheran-Anglican claim of a deeper understanding of episcopal succession as sign.²⁹⁸ The ELCD viewed the PCS in comparative perspective, but the PCS's christological and pneumatological method eluded her.

A consequence of the gap between the content of the PCS and the Danish interpretations of it is the Danish reluctance to give substance to the Porvoo Communion through common ordinations of new bishops of the Communion. However – and this is the approach of the PCS – the episcopal character of the ELCD, and its historical continuity in the life of the church and episcopal sees mean that Danish approval both can be reasonably based and is possible.

²⁹⁶ Drejergaard, 'Letter to Peder Nørgaard-Højen samt øvrige medlemmer af MKR's teologiske arbejdsgruppe 2010-04-17', p2.

²⁹⁷ E.g. Nissen, 'Banebrytende aftale till offentlig debat', p5f.

²⁹⁸ PCS Foreword, §9.

6. The international Porvoo debate

In this chapter I will investigate international reactions to the PCS to discern the arguments used for and against the Porvoo solution. The theologians investigated will be from different countries and from different denominational backgrounds: Lutheran, Anglican, Reformed, Methodist, Old-Catholic, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox theologians from Europe and the USA. I will also analyse the content of three official responses to the PCS from churches that are not part of Porvoo: the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (MS), the United Evangelical Church of Germany (VELKD), and the Old-Catholic Church. The focus is on two different types of material that at the same time are related to each other and cannot always be clearly separated. The two types of material are, first, evaluations of the PCS written from the perspective of one denominational position, and secondly, those written primarily from the theological perspective of the ecumenical movement. Both approaches have implications for their interpretation of the PCS. In general it is possible to state that those writing from a denominational perspective were more critical of the Porvoo solution than were those writing from an ecumenical perspective, even if also from a denominational background.

6.1. Reactions to the PCS in the USA

In an official statement in 1999 entitled *The Porvoo Statement and Declaration in Confessional Lutheran Perspective*, the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod (MS) commented on the PCS. Another American evaluation was written in 1999 by Meg H. Madson, a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Madson's article was a personal contribution to the discussion of the Lutheran-Episcopal Concordat and should not be considered as a full analysis of the PCS. However, due to their similar content I discuss them together. Then I investigate three other American responses to the PCS: one Episcopalian, one Lutheran, and one Methodist.

The evaluations by the MS and Madson were both written with a negative attitude towards episcopal succession, and were thus both critical of the PCS, understanding it primarily as a way for the Anglican Church to confer the threefold order and episcopal succession on the Nordic-Baltic churches. The ecclesiological perspective underlying the Porvoo solution, and the goal of a visible unity beyond the present denominational identities, were not consid-

ered. In contrast, the authors emphasised a strong opposition between word/doctrine and episcopacy.¹ The MS argued that order is primarily an adiaphoron, and that the crucial question, rather, is: “Where today is the doctrine of the apostles?”² Madson claimed that “nothing can be made a requirement alongside the Word of God. The Gospel means freedom from any particular church structure. Lutherans are thus quite content to use traditional polity, including episcopal structures and even the papacy, provided that no one particular structure or kind of oversight is required”.³ Rather than reading the content of the PCS, the authors described the respective Lutheran and Anglican identities, and stated that they were incompatible. As the title of its statement already indicates, the MS stated:

To accept diplomatic treaty-texts like Porvoo as evidence of a doctrinal consensus and as a proper basis for pulpit and altar fellowship is to surrender the Lutheran confession in general and the Sacrament of the Altar in particular.⁴

This not only reveals a different understanding of ecumenism, but also a different understanding of unity from that of the PCS. Madson found the PCS’s emphasis on episcopacy contradictory, since it is supposed to be an effective sign at the same time as the Lutheran churches are in full communion with all the Lutheran churches in the LWF. She said further that presbyterally-ordained ministers can minister in the CoS despite the lack of ordination in episcopal succession. Madson also noted the tension in the letter of the CoS’s Bishops Conference in 1922.⁵ On unity, she stressed that the PCS dealt with churches that were geographically far apart from each other, and that the PCS represented a concept of unity that is less than full communion.⁶ Madson based her interpretation on an article by the Episcopalian theologian, Robert J Wright. Wright said that the concept of unity in the PCS is less

¹ Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, Scaer, and Arand, ‘The Porvoo Statement’, p23ff; Madson, ‘The Lutheran-Episcopal Concordat and Porvoo’, p25.

² Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, Scaer, and Arand, ‘The Porvoo Statement’, p23ff.

³ Madson, ‘The Lutheran-Episcopal Concordat and Porvoo’, p25.

⁴ Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, Scaer, and Arand, ‘The Porvoo Statement’, p20. The MS approach was based on a negative understanding of modern ecumenism, in contrast to a confessional perspective, and stated: “The significance of Porvoo lies not in its novelty – its approach is not new – but in the scope and clarity with which it exemplifies the ruling ‘ecumenical paradigm’”; and the MS stated: “Purely as a historical development the Porvoo pact makes perfect sense. Its member-churches have similar histories as reformationally transformed remnants in northern Europe of the Constantinian establishment. As ecclesiastical appendages of modern secularized societies and states, their very existence is anomalous. ... The church is undoubtedly hidden also under these bureaucratic structures ... but the structures as such have for the most part long ceased to be or to behave as confessional churches.”

⁵ Madson, ‘The Lutheran-Episcopal Concordat and Porvoo’, p23f. Madson notes this with reference to Swedish theologian G. Wingren and his book, *The Living Word* (Fortress 1949). However, she does not mention that Wingren describes only one of those two poles, and that there has been significant ecumenical and theological development in the understanding of ecclesiology and ordained ministry since 1949, both in the CoS and internationally.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p22.

demanding than in the *Concordat of Agreement*, since it is about churches in different nations and since the PCS does not speak about *full communion*.⁷ Wright said this in an article that was an defence of the *Concordat of Agreement*, and did not note that in the PCS the concept of *full communion* is replaced by the more demanding term *visible unity*.

A different approach was represented by the Lutheran (ELCA) theologian and ecumenist, Michael Root (who later became a Roman Catholic in 2010). In several articles he described how the PCS, *Called to Common Mission* (CCM),⁸ and *Called to Full Communion: the Waterloo report* (Waterloo),⁹ are based on earlier international Anglican-Lutheran ecumenical documents. Root notes that the PCS is part of a larger ecumenical development between the Lutheran and Anglican communions, and states that the PCS can be interpreted as a regional application of the perspective and proposals of the Niagara report.¹⁰ In contrast to the MS's and Madson's restrictive approaches, he asks whether "Anglicans and Lutherans together [can] develop an evangelical and catholic vision of the faith that each can claim as their own and together offer ecumenically to others?"¹¹ The obstacle to such a common Anglican-Lutheran evangelic-catholic vision has been episcopacy.¹² An indication of a possible solution to this dilemma, according to Root, was the 1922 letter of the Swedish episcopate in the dialogue between the CoS and the CoE. The statement was an early attempt to express a "Lutheran perspective which sought to understand episcopacy neither as an *ius divinum* nor as an adiaphoron in the strict sense of an indifferent matter, but as something requiring some additional theological category. While such a perspective has roots not just in Swedish documents, but in the Lutheran Confessions, it has been a minority outlook in much of modern non-Nordic Lutheranism".¹³ Against this background, Root offers one of the most constructive interpretations, and says that the PCS (and the CCM):

...continue a shift away from questions of validity of ministries and the relation between episcopacy and the essential nature of the Church and toward a consideration of the role of the bishops as sign and instrument of unity and continuity. This shift has at least two crucial advantages. First, it overcomes divisions between ontological and functionalist understandings of ministry. A sign is a sign not just in what it does, but in what it is; or rather, one is hard

⁷ Wright, 'In Support of the Concordat: A Response to Its Opponents', p171.

⁸ ELCA/Episcopal Church, 'Called to Common Mission: A Lutheran Proposal for a Revision of the Concordat of Agreement (CCM)'.

⁹ Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada (ELCC) and Anglican Church of Canada, 'Waterloo'.

¹⁰ Root, 'Porvoo in the Context of the Worldwide Anglican-Lutheran Dialogue', p24ff; See also; Root, 'Consistency and Difference'.

¹¹ Root, 'Porvoo in the Context of the Worldwide Anglican-Lutheran Dialogue', p33; Root, 'Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Their Broader Ecumenical Significance', p32.

¹² Root, 'Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Their Broader Ecumenical Significance', p23.

¹³ Root, 'Porvoo in the Context of the Worldwide Anglican-Lutheran Dialogue', p17f.

pressed to distinguish 'is' and 'does' in a truly effective sign. Second, the categories of sign and instrument allow ways of articulating the importance or even the necessity of something, without implying that such a something is essential in a narrow and strict sense. The language of sign and instrument helps Lutherans in particular to find a category between the simply essential and the merely adiaphoral, non-essential.¹⁴

Root notes that in the PCS the understanding of episcopal ministry as sign is situated in the broader understanding of the whole church as apostolic and in service of its unity and continuity in the apostolic mission, which Christ entrusted to the apostles. Root states that this broadened perspective does not in itself solve the question about episcopal succession. Carrying out the apostolic mission still needs a particular structure. Root then describes episcopal succession as a necessary, but not sufficient, sign for the church's unity and continuity in the apostolic mission:

Various elements make up a Church's continuity in the apostolic mission. ... If, as the *Niagara Report* emphasises, the ultimate guarantee of apostolic continuity lies not in any structure within the Church but lies only in the promised faithfulness of God, then the phrase 'sign, but not guarantee' applies to all possible structures of continuity. No one element in the Church's continuity is the guarantee (i.e., infallible and sufficient criterion) of continuity in the mission which remains that of Christ and his Spirit.

Such a stress on the variety of the elements of continuity and on their fallibility means that we should have a certain openness to the historically specific ways differing traditions have maintained the faith and its mission. In a situation of extremity (e.g., the radical failure of the entire episcopate within the Holy Roman Empire to tolerate the Wittenberg reform movement), some Churches may be forced to abandon some element of continuity that another Church finds indispensable. Again, we should not exaggerate how far this perspective can carry us. Even if no element of continuity is an infallible, sufficient criterion of continuity, it may still be that certain elements are necessary, i.e., they do not guarantee continuity, but there is no continuity without them.¹⁵

Root emphasises two other important features in the PCS: the mutual recognition of ordained ministry, and how unity is to be understood. Root notes that the situation in the Nordic-Baltic Lutheran churches is very different from that in the ELCA and stresses that in the PCS "the discussion stresses the extensive forms of episcopal continuity that are already present in all of the Churches involved. The movement into closer fellowship is made on the basis of these prior recognitions."¹⁶ The PCS should be understood in the perspective of its "vision of apostolicity and episcopacy",¹⁷ with importance

¹⁴ Root, 'Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Their Broader Ecumenical Significance', p23f.

¹⁵ Ibid., p24.

¹⁶ Ibid., p26.

¹⁷ Ibid.

for the concept of unity. According to Root, the basis for unity in the PCS is the concept of *koinonia*, which is “richer in its understanding of common life, but just for that reason less focused on unified organisational structures”.¹⁸ The PCS does not propose for the immediate future “an organisational merger, i.e., the creation of a single ecclesial organisation into which the previously distinct organisations are absorbed”.¹⁹ Root, like earlier American commentators, says that the PCS proposes a unity less than *full communion*, but he does not consider that the authors of the PCS consciously avoided this ambiguous term in favour of the more demanding one *visible unity*.²⁰

In an article, the English-American Methodist Geoffrey Wainwright compared recent Anglican dialogues in Meissen, Porvoo, and the Anglican-Methodist dialogue in Great Britain. He found “a theological inconsistency in the developing Anglican tendency to recognise the existing *apostolicity* of a church without ‘the historic episcopate’ while insisting on the need of its presence for full communion. To resolve the inconsistency by dropping the insistence might prove ecumenically productive.”²¹ Wainwright argued that “the historic episcopate may be affirmed *in so far* as it both fulfils its responsibilities of teaching and maintaining the faith and remains corrigible in the light of Scripture and the steadfast practices of the church”,²² but should not be regarded as a necessity for the church.

6.2. European Protestant evaluations of the PCS

The Meissen agreement between the CoE, the *Federation of the Evangelical Churches in the German Democratic Republic* and the *Evangelical Church in (West) Germany*,²³ signed in 1991, was important in the formulation of the PCS. The signing of the PD in 1996 was therefore also of interest in those churches standing in ecumenical relationships with any of the Porvoo Churches through Meissen, similar agreements,²⁴ Leuenberg, or the LWF. In this section I will investigate the content of the official response to the PCS by the *Vereinigte Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche Deutschlands* (The United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany) (VELKD) in 1996,²⁵ as part of

¹⁸ Ibid., p27.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Root, “‘Reconciled Diversity’ and the Visible Unity of the Church”.

²¹ Wainwright, ‘Is Episcopal Succession a Matter of Dogma for Anglicans?’, p175; Cf. Dalferth, ‘Ministry and the Office of Bishop’; Morero, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’.

²² Wainwright, ‘Is Episcopal Succession a Matter of Dogma for Anglicans?’, p176.

²³ Later, when the two German Republics were united, the two church structures merged into the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*, EKD.

²⁴ Since 2002 the ELCD, and since 2003 the CoS, have had agreements with the EKD based on and similar to the Meissen agreement.

²⁵ VELKD, *Porvooer Gemeinsame Feststellung*. VELKD is part of the EKD.

EKD. In my treatment of VELKD's evaluation of the PCS, I will also refer to the answer of the CoE's *Faith and Order Advisory Group* (FOAG) to VELKD's response.²⁶

Further, I will discuss the lectures of various theologians from different backgrounds given at international ecumenical conferences, one of which was held in September 1995 on the relationships between Leuenberg, Meissen, and Porvoo.²⁷ Under Meissen, one conference was held with representatives from the CoE and the EKD in 1996.²⁸ In 2003, ten years after the signing of the Meissen agreement, a collection of significant papers from the conversations between the CoE and EKD under the Meissen agreement were published.²⁹ Lectures from a further conference, related to the role of apostolicity and succession in the PCS, was published in *Louvain Studies* in 1996.³⁰ In 2002, ten years after the final text of the PCS had been agreed, an anthology edited by Tjørhom was published with contributions from a variety of international scholars.³¹ Furthermore, I will discuss articles from international ecumenists published in various journals.

In VELKD, and among European Protestant theologians, the question in focus was whether episcopal succession as the form of *episcopé* is necessary. *Episcopé* was recognised as necessary, and the threefold ministry and episcopal succession were seen as possible; but rejected since regarded as merely a historical development and therefore as contingent. Consequently it was asked why the Anglican churches could not recognise the ordained ministry of the churches of EKD and enter into a full visible communion with different forms of *episcopé*. The Protestant view is summarised in Leuenberg in these terms: "No single historically-derived form of church leadership and ministerial structure should or can be laid down as a prior condition for fellowship and for mutual recognition".³² The Protestant understanding is also expressed in the 16th section of Meissen and contrasted with the Anglican one:

Lutheran, Reformed and United Churches, though being increasingly prepared to appreciate episcopal succession 'as a sign of the apostolicity of the life of the whole Church', hold that this particular form of *episcopé* should not become a necessary condition for 'full visible unity'. The Anglican un-

²⁶ CoE, FOAG, 'A Response to the Comment'.

²⁷ Hüffmeier and Podmore, *Leuenberg, Meissen und Porvoo*.

²⁸ Meissen Commission, *Visible Unity and the Ministry of Oversight*. The conference was the second launched by the *Meissen Commission* after the Meissen Agreement had been signed. The first in 1995 was on the Eucharist, and the second in 1996 on Episcopal succession.

²⁹ Dalferth, *Einheit Bezeugen*.

³⁰ Puglisi and Dennis, *Apostolic Continuity of the Church and the Apostolic Succession*.

³¹ Tjørhom, *Apostolicity and Unity*.

³² Leuenberger Kirchengemeinschaft, 'Theses on the Current Discussion about Ministry (Tampere Theses 1986)', p116.

derstanding of full, visible unity includes the historic episcopate and full interchangeability of ministers.³³

Most, but not all, Protestant commentators proceeded from this perspective. I will begin with the VELKD's Official Response to the PCS. Thereafter I will thematically treat European Lutheran, Reformed, and United theologians who were not part of the Porvoo churches – mainly from Germany, but also from France, Italy, and Sweden – under the following headings: 1. The formal response to the PCS by VELKD. 2. The understanding of the church in the PCS. 3. Unity. 4. Episcopacy and the visible unity of the church.

6.2.1. The formal response to the PCS by VELKD

VELKD aimed to investigate whether the PCS met the requirements of what was called the “catalogue of the CA 7 conditions for unity”.³⁴ VELKD's response to the PCS is given in five parts: 1. the unity model, 2. the apostolicity of the Church, 3. episcopacy and *episcopé*, 4. the meaning of episcopal succession, and 5. the relation of the PCS to Meissen.³⁵ I will discuss the first four. A general impression of the response is that those five parts are not really kept together, but somehow fall apart – with consequences for how the PCS was understood.

The unity model: VELKD said that the concept of unity in the PCS does not mean uniformity, but *unity in diversity*. With reference to the LWF Assembly of 1977, this concept was interpreted as *reconciled diversity* and in consequence it was stated that the PCS is not “the first step to creating a new church”.³⁶ However, these two concepts, *unity in diversity* and *reconciled diversity*, are not equivalent, since the LWF Assembly understood *reconciled diversity* as reconciliation in confessional division. This was noted in the CoE's answer to and critique of VELKD's interpretation.³⁷ With reference to CA 7, VELKD asked whether ordained ministry according to the PCS is a precondition and is *necessary* for unity. Since in §28 the PCS emphasises that ordained ministry *supports* the unity of the Church, the VELKD states that Porvoo's view of unity and ministry could be regarded as evangelic in accordance with CA 5. VELKD states that, as in *Meissen*, the PCS makes a distinction between what forms the community of the church – i.e., the communal celebration of the sacrament – and what makes this community visible (*Sichtbarkeit der Gemeinschaft*), to which the united ministry be-

³³ EKD/CoE, ‘Meissen’, p138, §16.

³⁴ VELKD, *Porvooer Gemeinsame Feststellung*, p6. „...der Katalog der in CA VII für die Einheit der Kirche beschriebenen Voraussetzung erweitert wird.” For a comment on VELKD's response see Schütte, ‘Verwirklichung sichtbarer Einheit’.

³⁵ VELKD, *Porvooer Gemeinsame Feststellung*, p8.

³⁶ Ibid., p10. „...das Dokument [ist] auch nicht der erste schritt zur Bildung einer einheitlichen Kirche.”

³⁷ CoE, FOAG, ‘A Response to the Comment’, p2f.

long.³⁸ In its answer to VELKD, the FOAG stated that it is two different things to ask whether ordained ministry is a precondition for unity and to ask whether it is essential (*esse*). The FOAG stressed that, for Anglican churches, ordained ministry is a precondition for unity, but that the PCS does not ask:

Whether it belongs to the *esse* of the Church, and it is not necessary to do so. ... To say that it [i.e. episcopacy] is normative is not to say that it is of the *esse* of the Church, or to unchurch those churches in which it does not presently exist.³⁹

Apostolicity of the Church: Apostolicity in the PCS is understood by VELKD as a characteristic and mission for the whole church, including both lay and ordained ministry. VELKD was positive about this description, because it does not link apostolicity to a particular form of ordained ministry, but “rather recognises the witness of the whole church”.⁴⁰ According to VELKD, the focus of the Church’s apostolicity and unity is consistency in teaching (*Überstimmung in der Lehre*). FOAG said that this description is not against the PCS, but it does not include the fact that the PCS also states that, within the apostolic tradition of the whole church, there is an “apostolic succession of the ministry which serves and is a focus of the continuity of the Church”.⁴¹

Episcopacy and episcopé: VELKD saw episcopacy in the PCS foremost as a pragmatic understanding emphasising “service and communication within the community”.⁴² It was noted that the PCS does not specify whether episcopacy belongs to the *esse* or the *bene esse* of the Church, and according to VELKD it is not necessary to specify this. VELKD found the form, called “alternative form”, of episcopacy in the PCS to be consistent with CA 28.⁴³ However, VELKD found it problematic that episcopacy in the PCS seems to be something more than the presbyter, but noted that PCS §41 speaks about one ministry with different tasks.⁴⁴ VELKD illustrated this with the doctrinal letter about threefold ministry by the CoS Bishops’ Conference, which, according to VELKD, describes ordination to bishop, priest and deacon as equivalent.⁴⁵ Ordination was interpreted in functional terms as a commissioning of tasks. This interpretation was criticised by FOAG, which stated that “the episcopal ministry does not simply exist within the apostolicity of the

³⁸ VELKD, *Porvoor Gemeinsame Feststellung*, p10f.

³⁹ CoE, FOAG, ‘A Response to the Comment’, p3.

⁴⁰ VELKD, *Porvoor Gemeinsame Feststellung*. „...sondern sie im Zeugnis der ganzen Kirche erkennt“.

⁴¹ PCS, §40. See also CoE, FOAG, ‘A Response to the Comment’, p4.

⁴² PCS § 43.

⁴³ VELKD, *Porvoor Gemeinsame Feststellung*, p14.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p15.

⁴⁵ See; CoS, the Bishops’ Conference, *Bishop, Priest and Deacon in the CoS*.

whole Church, but actually serves it. It exists not just for the purpose of oversight, but also has a representative function”.⁴⁶ FOAG further noted that the threefold ministry was not only a question about different tasks in the PCS, but that those tasks found “expression in its structuring”,⁴⁷ and that the view of the PCS was consistent with the letter of the Swedish bishops.⁴⁸

The meaning of episcopal succession: VELKD described episcopal succession as the core of the PCS, and understood it as the continuity of episcopal sees. Through this, Porvoo is understood to recognise churches that had an occasional presbyteral ordination at the time of the Reformation.⁴⁹ That the sign of episcopal succession is not seen as a guarantee for the faithfulness of a church is commended by the VELKD,⁵⁰ and used to expose the problem about episcopal succession:

The Reformation wing of the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church embodies in it the tension between continuity and dis-continuity in the maintenance of apostolicity. ... This tension must be maintained and may not be surrendered. Only this tension reveals the right relation between the apostolicity of the Church and episcopal succession. The *successio apostolica* can only find its expression in the interruption of the historic succession.⁵¹

According to VELKD, this is the critical question. VELKD states that ordained ministry is derived from the preaching of the Gospel. In this sense VELKD also emphasised the necessity of apostolic succession, meaning “linkage of our offices to the original apostolic witness”,⁵² and also understood the ordained ministry of VELKD to be in apostolic succession. VELKD was not against episcopal succession, which is not “an optional or negligible sign of the apostolicity of the church”,⁵³ neither is it regarded as a necessary sign that, if missing, must be healed by “earlier lines of succession”,⁵⁴ because apostolic succession cannot be understood as solely depend-

⁴⁶ CoE, FOAG, ‘A Response to the Comment’, p4.

⁴⁷ PCS § 41.

⁴⁸ CoE, FOAG, ‘A Response to the Comment’, p4.

⁴⁹ VELKD, *Porvooer Gemeinsame Feststellung*, p16.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid., p17. „Der reformatorische Flügel der Einen. Heiligen, Katholischen und Apostolischen Kirche verkörpert in sich die **Spannung zwischen Kontinuität und Diskontinuität in der Bewahrung der Apostolizität**. ... Diese Spannung muß aufrechterhalten und darf nicht preisgegeben werden. **Nur in dieser Spannung geraten Apostolizität der Kirche und bischöfliche Sukzessionen in ein rechtes Verhältnis zueinander**. Die *successio apostolica* kann gerade in der Unterbrechung der historischen Sukzession ihren Ausdruck finden.”

⁵² Ibid. „...Anknüpfung unseres Amtes an dem ursprünglichen apostolischen Zeugnis“. C.f. Meyer, ‘Apostolic Continuity, Ministry and Apostolic Succession from a Reformation Perspective’, p173f.

⁵³ VELKD, *Porvooer Gemeinsame Feststellung*, p17. „...ein beliebiges oder zu vernachlässigendes Zeichen der Apostolizität der Kirche wäre.”

⁵⁴ Ibid., p17; See also Dalferth who explicitly deals with this in; Dalferth, ‘Visible Unity and the Episcopal Office’, p210ff.

ent on a “historic detectable chain of episcopal succession”.⁵⁵ Episcopal succession was understood as a sign that has its origin in the historical shape of the church; and VELKD implicitly said that episcopal succession is not of divine origin (*iure divino*). As a historical development, according to VELKD, episcopal succession cannot be regarded as a condition for church communion. However, VELKD also stated that the unity of the church is not only about communion in apostolic faith, but also communion in apostolic ministry, and that Lutheran theology must show how its ordained ministry relates to the ministry of the one Church.⁵⁶ VELKD emphasised that, from a Reformation perspective, it must be asked:

Whether a historically developed element of the office of the Church can be regarded as the basis for the unity of the Church, in terms of communion of churches. If this question is answered in the affirmative, there is another question to clarify: whether this element is so important that its absence limits church fellowship or even prevents it.⁵⁷

In contrast, BEM, and the PCS following its lead, adopt a positive approach. PCS states that “the threefold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it.”⁵⁸ FOAG commented on the VELKD’s approach in precise terms:

The discussion of whether use of the sign is ‘necessary’ clearly relates to the ‘*satis est*’ of CA VII. If, in line with CA VII, only certain things are regarded by Lutherans as necessary for unity with other churches, does this in itself necessarily preclude unity with other churches which may regard other things as also, at least in practice, necessary for unity? In other words, is a statement that nothing but agreement in the doctrine of the Gospel and in the administration of the sacraments is required for unity itself one of the requirements for unity, and if so, does not the requirement of such a statement itself go beyond what CA VII says is sufficient?⁵⁹

At the same time, FOAG appreciated that VELKD had said that it could adopt episcopal succession as a sign of its “theological intention”.⁶⁰ With this

⁵⁵ VELKD, *Porvoor Gemeinsame Feststellung*, p17.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p17f.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p18. „...ob ein geschichtlich gewachsenes Element des kirchlichen Amtes die Einheit der Kirche im Sinne der Gemeinschaft von Kirchen begründen kann. Wenn man diese Frage bejaht, ist die andere Frage zu klären, ob dieses Element so wichtig ist, daß sein Fehlen Kirchengemeinschaft begrenzt oder gar verhindert.”

⁵⁸ PCS §32j.

⁵⁹ CoE, FOAG, ‘A Response to the Comment’, p5; Cf. Sykes, ‘The CoE and the Leuenberg’, p4. Sykes asks: “It should be said that Anglicans would have no intention of insisting on a more restrictive understanding of the episcopate than, for example, the authors of the Augsburg Confession themselves.”

⁶⁰ CoE, FOAG, ‘A Response to the Comment’, p5 quoted from;; VELKD, *Porvoor Gemeinsame Feststellung*, p17. „Das theologisch Gemeinde”.

approach of VELKD in mind, FOAG's question about the reading of CA 7 becomes even more applicable.

Behind the VELKD's evaluation of the PCS lies a different ecclesiology than that in the PCS which does not regard church and ordained ministry in a sacramental perspective. Also important is the relation with the *koinonia* of the Church, and how this manifests itself visibly in the ordained ministry, which, however, was not clarified in the VELKD's response.

6.2.2. The Understanding of the Church in the PCS

In the European Protestant discussion about the PCS, there was a focus on the Porvoo solution, while the ecclesiological content of the PCS and the basis for the Porvoo solution remained in the background or was thought to be alien to Lutheran or Protestant teaching.⁶¹ The German Lutheran scholar Heinrich Holze evaluated the ecclesiology of the PCS differently. He interpreted the PCS' ecclesiology in four dimensions: Trinitarian, sacramental, apostolic, and eschatological. He understood those to "express the vertical and the horizontal level of the church, its eternal and temporal character, and they are connected in the concept of communion (*koinonia*)".⁶² In summary Holze stated that:

The Trinitarian dimension corresponds with the insistence that the church is a creature of the Gospel of the Triune God who creates, reconciles, and renews the world. The sacramental dimension stresses that word and sacrament are the distinctive features of church. The apostolic dimension expresses the existence of the church across time and space. Finally, the eschatological dimension emphasizes that the church – as a sign of God's purpose with the whole creation – points beyond itself.⁶³

Holze judged the ecclesiology of the PCS to be convergent with Lutheran theology, but stated that questions remained about the understanding of what he called the apostolic dimension of the church, "especially in view of the doctrine of the ministry, the episcopate, and the historic succession".⁶⁴ When comparing the PCS with Luther, Holze found a different view in the PCS, in line with BEM, which emphasises the visible continuity of the church. By contrast, "the continuity Luther is talking about is not external, not visible continuity. It is not a continuity that can be shown in institutions, traditions, or ministries. It is a continuity that is defined as the continuity of the gospel, as the continuity of Christ present in the Holy Spirit. This spiritual continuity

⁶¹ Cf. Dalferth, 'Ministry and the Office of Bishop', p12, 33; Frieling, 'Leuenberg, Meissen und Porvoo', p169ff; Ricca, 'Taccuino ecumenico: Leuenberg - Meissen - Porvoo', p239; Hardt, 'A Theological Evaluation', p3ff.

⁶² Holze, 'The Ecclesiology of the PCS', p99.

⁶³ Ibid., p109.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

is essential for Luther's understanding of the church."⁶⁵ Simultaneously Holze noted that the continuity of the church, as understood in the PCS, is not only a question of episcopal succession, but episcopacy is distinguished from word and sacrament as a sign, but no guarantee. This makes the PCS closer to CA 5, which also stresses the instrumental character of ordained ministry and as instituted by God, especially since ordained ministry in the PCS is embedded in a *communio* ecclesiology.⁶⁶

6.2.3. Episcopacy and the visible unity of the church

In general the European Protestant evaluations of the PCS were based on an understanding of apostolicity as a question of true doctrine, with consequences for how unity and ordained ministry are understood and related to each other.⁶⁷ The French Reformed Professor André Birmelé stated in a comparison of Leuenberg, Meissen and Porvoo that the basis of unity in all three agreements is the communion given by God, but that the form this unity takes differs, and especially in relation to episcopacy.⁶⁸ The German Lutheran ecumenist Günther Gaßman noted the importance of "the missionary, spiritual and social obligation of the participating churches in a changing Europe" for the concept of unity.⁶⁹

The German Lutheran ecumenist Harding Meyer related unity in the PCS to the general ecumenical discussion about concepts or models of unity from the 1960s onwards. He found that the PCS:

Does not commit itself to one particular idea among the models or concepts of unity advocated in the ecumenical movement, but does integrate some of their basic concerns. Thus it reflects the procedure of the Lutheran/Roman Catholic dialogue document "Facing Unity," which also does not commit itself to one particular concept of unity, but describes, although much more extensively, the shape or form of unity by incorporating the concerns of several concepts.⁷⁰

Since the PCS emphasises in §23 that unity is not to be understood as uniformity, Meyer found that the PCS integrates "a central concern of the concept of 'unity in reconciled diversity'". At the same time the PCS integrates the "concept of 'organic union' or 'corporate union', although this concept as such does not apply to the relationship between *national churches* as the Porvoo statement does, but rather to the unity of churches" within the same

⁶⁵ Ibid., p111.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p113.

⁶⁷ Cf. VELKD, *Porvooer Gemeinsame Feststellung*, p13; Dalferth, 'Ministry and the Office of Bishop', p33.

⁶⁸ Birmelé, 'Leuenberg-Meissen-Porvoo', p73f; Birmelé, 'The Unity of the Church', p260; Gaßman, 'Leuenberg, Meissen, Porvoo', p27.

⁶⁹ Gaßman, 'Leuenberg, Meissen, Porvoo', p27; Gaßman, 'Das Porvoo-Dokument', p178.

⁷⁰ Meyer, 'Some Observations Concerning the Unity Concept of the PCS', p137.

territory.⁷¹ Meyer stated that, integral to the concept of organic or corporate union, is the concern for *structured forms*, required for visible unity. This leads the PCS to the discussion of a unity supported by a “united ministry”, “and not just by a mutually recognized ministry”.⁷² This in turn has consequences for how the PCS related to episcopacy in the Porvoo churches.

Among European Protestant commentators, it was generally agreed that ordained ministry and the function of *episcopé* were instituted by God. The form of *episcopo*, however, was not agreed upon.⁷³ With the view on episcopal succession presented in Meissen as his starting point, the German professor and EKD representative Ingolf U. Dalferth found the Anglican policy on episcopacy and unity contradictory. The CoE does recognise the ordained ministry of the churches of EKD and the sacraments conducted by this ordained ministry. At the same time, the CoE rejects full visible unity, based on the necessity of episcopal succession and threefold ministry. Dalferth asked:

If there is no fundamental difference with regard to the carrying out of ordained ministry, there is then no theological reason (as distinct from a legal one) to demand the re-ordination of non-episcopally ordained ministers. ... That can only mean that the demand that other churches take over the historic episcopate and episcopal ordination as a condition and pre-condition for the establishment of unlimited Eucharistic fellowship with other churches is dropped. ... Why then is the claim held to that the historic episcopate and the threefold ministry ‘in historic succession’ which is linked to it must be the ‘future pattern of the one ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament’? Is not a legal situation in the Church of England here given an ecclesiological weight which, theological speaking, it does not deserve?⁷⁴

Dalferth build his assertion on the history of the CoE, arguing that the understanding of ordained ministry in the CoE had changed through its history.⁷⁵ He said that early in the Reformation history there had been no problem for Protestant ministers to serve in the CoE, while the emphasis on the threefold order and succession came later. An important reason for this development, according to Dalferth, was not theological but historical, arising from the ecclesial need in 17th century England to emphasise the church’s independence from the state. In this process episcopacy and episcopal succession came to be emphasised as ways to achieve this. Through the 19th century

⁷¹ Ibid., p136.

⁷² Ibid., p139.

⁷³ E.g. Dalferth, ‘Ministry and the Office of Bishop’, p15; This article was also published in two parts in; Dalferth, ‘Amt und Bischofsamt nach Meissen und Porvoo’.

⁷⁴ Dalferth, ‘Ministry and the Office of Bishop’, p27.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p18ff; For a positive evaluation of Dalferth’s article, see Parmentier, ‘Die Alt-katholische Ekklesiologie’, p40f.

For a critique see Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p203, note 8. See further chapter 13.1.

Tractarians, the practice of the CoE came to be made into a theological principle, formulated as “where there is no bishop in apostolic succession, there is also no Church”.⁷⁶ Dalferth found that “the driving forces in the development of the Anglican theology of episcopacy were not primarily or exclusively theological but always also (church) political considerations”.⁷⁷ In modern times the traditional Anglo-Catholic doctrine of succession has, according to Dalferth, been rejected by the dominant theological movement. Instead the Anglican position has changed, seeing episcopal succession in terms of its function, rather than as the *esse* of the Church and necessary for the *visible* unity, and thus for the continuity of the church.⁷⁸ The question, according to Dalferth, is why the CoE insists on episcopacy as a necessity for unity. The Anglo-Catholic wing had an answer to this, but since this position has been abandoned by the CoE, the only argument the CoE seems to have, according to Dalferth, is the answer given in *Apostolicity and Succession*:⁷⁹ that the threefold ministry was the form of ordained ministry in the earliest and patristic eras of the church. Dalferth concluded that:

Even if one is of the opinion that ‘the continuity with the Church of the Apostles finds profound expression in the successive laying on of hands by bishops’ (para. 50),⁸⁰ it does not follow from this that this continuity would have to be expressed in this way or that it would be better, more visibly, more effectively or more convincingly expressed in this way than through the faith-inspiring proclamation of the Gospel by word and sacrament in a church which continually orientates its proclamation to and examines it against the apostolic norm of Scripture afresh.⁸¹

Although Dalferth’s argumentation relates primarily to Meissen, it has relevance for the Porvoo debate, since the PCS uses the threefold ministry as a means to and expression of unity. This use of the threefold ministry in the PCS differs from Meissen, in which it is the decisive difference between the German churches and the CoE.

Dalferth found the argumentation in the PCS dubious. He stated that the question of episcopal succession is treated indirectly rather than directly, and that the method used is to contextualise episcopal succession ecclesiologically and to progress “from the *Church* via the *ministry* to the *episcopal ministry* and the *historic succession*”.⁸² Dalferth concluded:

⁷⁶ Dalferth, ‘Ministry and the Office of Bishop’, p25.

⁷⁷ Ibid., p25; This statement by Dalferth was taken as the starting point for Mark D Chapman a few years later, see; Chapman, ‘The Politics of Episcopacy’, p152.

⁷⁸ Dalferth, ‘Ministry and the Office of Bishop’, p25ff.

⁷⁹ CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*.

⁸⁰ Para 50 refers to *Apostolicity and Succession*, which quotes BEM, M.53. That the quote goes back to BEM, however, is not reflected upon by Dalferth.

⁸¹ Dalferth, ‘Ministry and the Office of Bishop’, p29.

⁸² Ibid.

It cannot be overlooked that the unclarity in the theological argumentation [in the PCS] increase with every step and culminate in the theology of sign.

- While the ordained ministry in the Church is justified theologically as ‘instituted by our Lord and transmitted through the apostles’, its development into the threefold ministry is justified functionally and pragmatically (para. 41).
- In the case of *episcopé*, on the other hand, the argumentation is exactly the opposite: the necessity of a ‘ministry of co-ordination’ is justified functionally by ‘this diversity and multiplicity of tasks’ in the service of the unity of the church (para. 42), consecration to the episcopal office by contrast theologically as the transmission of office and authority according to ‘God’s will and institution’ (para. 48).

But if the *existence* of the ordained ministries is theologically necessary but not its contingent structuring as *threefold ministry*, how then, by contrast, can the episcopal office be theologically necessary in the context of the threefold ministry?⁸³

Behind Dalferth’s evaluation is the question of what is *iure divino* or *iure humano* in the church and in turn necessary or only contingent in the church. Since Dalferth did not find that the PCS reasoned episcopacy to be *iure divino*; he asked whether in the PCS there was not an “importance being ascribed to bishops which at best belongs to the ministry of *episcopé*, but not to the ministers?”⁸⁴ Dalferth found the sacramental theology in the PCS problematic, especially its sign terminology, which “describes something dark with something darker”.⁸⁵ The problem of the theology of sign for Dalferth was that it is used in PCS to explain the ecclesiological and ecumenical significance of episcopal succession, while at the same time the significance of episcopal succession is unclear. On the one hand, Dalferth found that, in its description of episcopal ordination as an effective sign, the PCS gives episcopal succession the same importance as the old Anglo-Catholic perception; however this is only stated but never reasoned. On the other hand, he found that, in its description of episcopal succession as a sign, although not a guarantee, that the PCS could hardly “withdraw further from the thesis of the supposed effectiveness of this sign for the making visible of unity, but it is nevertheless held fast to”.⁸⁶ Overall, Dalferth found that “in its status and function Porvoo’s theology of sign is on the same level as the Anglo-Catholic pipeline-theory, except that the latter has one advantage of the former – it is clearer”.⁸⁷

⁸³ Ibid., p32.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p34.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p33.

⁸⁷ Ibid., p34. Likewise the German theologian Christoph Schwöbel said that the remaining obstacles between the Meissen Churches had “not always been made easier by the *Porvoo Common Statement* and its theology of signs with its implications for the interpretation of ‘full, visible unity’.” In; Schwöbel, ‘The Church of Jesus Christ’, p437.

The normative status of the threefold ministry in BEM and the PCS was also questioned by the German Lutheran theologian Dorothea Wendebourg. She found it dubious that the only reason why “the ‘threefold ministry’ is held to have a normative quality [is] because it is said to have emerged during the first centuries in the history of the Church”.⁸⁸ According to Wendebourg, the history and practice of the church argues against rather than for the threefold ministry. Like Dalferth, she argues that the threefold ministry has to be reasoned theologically, not just historically, to gain normative status.⁸⁹

Gaßman appreciated the PCS differently, as an important ecumenical project. As the earlier Lutheran co-secretary at Pullach 1972, and the WCC Observer in the Porvoo Conversations, Gaßman read the PCS in a different perspective than VELKD, Dalferth and Wendebourg. Like the PCS, Gaßman did not discuss the question of validity or whether or not the threefold ministry is a necessity. He noted that the basis for unity in the PCS is, as in the WCC’s statement in Canberra in 1991, the *koinonia* as gift and calling, which in the PCS embraces both the requirements for unity in the Lutheran CA 7 and the Anglican Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral.⁹⁰ He saw the PCS denote that episcopal succession is a focal point of the apostolicity of the whole church and a gift given by God to serve and lead the church. Gaßman regarded §53 as the most important section of the PCS, in which “the mutual acknowledgment of our churches and ministries are prior” to the use of the sign of episcopal succession.⁹¹ He understood this as the recognition of churches in which episcopacy has been preserved through a presbyteral ordination at the time of the Reformation, and that those churches are free to recognise churches with preserved episcopal succession. He further noted that the churches’ continuity, represented by the historical episcopal sees, was important for this mutual recognition of ordained ministry in the PCS.⁹² Gaßman regarded the PCS as important in relation to the RCC, since through the PCS, episcopal succession was affirmed by churches that had not previously done this.

Tom G. Hardt, a Swedish Lutheran free-church theologian, said – in contrast to Gaßman – that the PCS emphasis on *successio sedis* was offensive, since “the carnal, fleshly succession that the Reformation condemned from the first was exactly the idea that successio localis would in any way confer

⁸⁸ Wendebourg, ‘The One Ministry of the One Church’, p303.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p303, note 17.

⁹⁰ Gaßman, ‘Anglican-Lutheran Convergence and the Anticipation of Full Communion’, p12.

⁹¹ Gaßman, ‘Das Porvoo-Dokument’, p178; See also; Ricca, ‘Taccuino ecumenico: Leuenberg - Meissen - Porvoo’, p239. Ricca emphasises §§52-53 as important for protestant churches without the sign of episcopal succession. However he does this without the PCS’s ecclesiological basis.

⁹² Gaßman, ‘Das Porvoo-Dokument’, p178; This was also noted by; Frieling, ‘Leuenberg, Meissen und Porvoo’, p163ff; Frieling, ‘Kirchengemeinschaft in Sicht’, p30.

any authority”.⁹³ Hardt did not reflect on the PCS notion of episcopal succession as “sign, but no guarantee”. Hardt’s interpretation was criticised by Hill, a critique I will come back to in the next chapter.

Unlike Dalferth and Hardt, but like Gaßman, Meyer gave praise to the PCS, but had also some critical remarks about the argumentation in the PCS, which he said was not always easy to follow. Like Dalferth, Meyer found it difficult to understand the “relation between the ‘*reality*’ of the episcopal office in apostolic succession and its ‘*sign*’, i.e. the ‘historical episcopal succession’ (§§51; 52)”.⁹⁴ Meyer notes that in §52, 56 and 57 in the PCS, it is stated that the Porvoo churches mutually recognise that an authentic episcopal office has been maintained in those churches. This would imply that the concept of unity of the PCS is a *concept of mutual recognition*; but the PCS “is not so straightforward because, here, the ‘*theory of sign*,’ if I may say so, interferes”.⁹⁵ Meyer stated that the PCS uses the term ‘sign’ in different ways about the church, and about episcopacy in general, but nevertheless it is obvious that ‘sign’ refers in particular to “episcopal succession realised in the ordination or consecration of a bishop through the act of laying on of hands by other bishops themselves standing in this succession”.⁹⁶ Since some of the Nordic churches have not preserved the sign of episcopal succession, Meyer noted, this stands in some contrast with the recognition of the episcopacy in all the churches as authentic. While it is this recognition that leads to a reconciled episcopal ministry, this contrast is crucial. Meyer discusses this further, claiming that when the §48 states that ordination in episcopal succession is effective in four ways, it is actually only the fourth that effects something, while the three first, in Meyer’s understanding, merely signify unity, but “in a strict sense, i.e. with regard to the ‘reality’ of the episcopal office, do not ‘effect’ anything”. Meyer states that:

Only the fourth and last affirmation points to something clearly ‘effective.’ It is said: ‘It (sc. the sign) *transmits* ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God’s will and institution.’ But if this is so then one cannot avoid asking whether the *absence of the ‘sign’ fundamentally questions the ‘reality’ of an ‘authentic episcopal office’* in the Lutheran churches, which after all, had been expressly ‘acknowledged’ by the Anglican partner.⁹⁷

Meyer’s reservation is particularly related to the statement in §52 that an “authentic episcopal office” has been preserved in those churches, with an interruption in episcopal succession, “*by an occasional priestly/presbyteral*

⁹³ Hardt, ‘A Theological Evaluation’, p11; Hardt was answered at the same conference in Latvia by Hill, ‘A Response to the Revd Dr T G Hardt’.

⁹⁴ Meyer, ‘Some Observations Concerning the Unity Concept of the PCS’, p138f.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p140.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p142.

ordination,” i.e. by an ordination that *exactly failed to preserve* the ‘sign of historic succession’ (§34)?” Meyer continues:

I would understand and, indeed, endorse an affirmation saying that an ‘authentic episcopal office’ that maintained ‘the continuity in the episcopal office’ can be preserved ‘*in spite of* an occasional priestly/presbyteral ordination,’ i.e., *in spite of* the missing ‘sign’ but I cannot understand that such an episcopal office can be preserved ‘*by* an occasional priestly/presbyteral ordination,’ i.e., by an ordination that has lost the sign, especially if it is true that this ‘sign’ ‘*transmits*’ the ministerial office [of the bishop] and its authority (§48).⁹⁸

Meyer concluded that the PCS’s use of the sign theory is not clear, and he raises questions about sign, ordination, and ecclesiology. Behind Meyer’s evaluation of the PCS is his understanding of the unity of the church as a reconciled episcopacy, reasoned by the Apology 14, but with diversity in the valuation of episcopacy and its exercise.⁹⁹ In the PCS he found support for both of those understandings, despite some questions that remained unclarified.

The European protestant critique of the PCS concerned a cluster of fundamental ecclesiological issues revealing different ecclesiologies and perceptions of specific issues. Those concerns questions as what is the Church and the unity of the Church, validity of ordained ministry and threefold ministry understood as *de iure divino* or *de jure humano*, which relates to the question of the relation between *episcopé* and its form, all with importance for the evaluation of the PCS. I will come back to those issues in Part III.

6.3. Old-Catholic responses to the PCS

Since the Old-Catholic church has been in communion with the Anglican Communion since 1932 through the Bonn Agreement of 1931,¹⁰⁰ the churches that are in visible unity with the Anglican churches are of interest for her,¹⁰¹ as in the PCS.¹⁰² Because of this relevance, *The 35th international Old-Catholic Theological Conference*, on September 4th 1999 in Wislikofen in Switzerland, was dedicated to the PCS, with the rubric: *Das Porvoo-Dokument als Anregung zur alt-katholischer Selbstreflektion* (The Porvoo

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ Meyer, ‘Apostolic Continuity, Ministry and Apostolic Succession from a Reformation Perspective’, p181f; Meyer, ‘Differentiated Participation: The Possibility of Protestant Sharing in the Historic Office of Bishop’.

¹⁰⁰ Anglican & Old Catholic Churches, ‘Bonn Agreement’, p38.

¹⁰¹ Since October 2016 the Old-Catholic Church and the CoS are in communion, see CoS and Old Catholic Church, ‘Utrecht and Uppsala on the Way to Communion’.

¹⁰² Eßer, ‘Ein Blick auf “Porvoo”’, p8; See also; Hind, ‘Anmerkungen zu “Porvoo”’.

Document as Stimulus for Old-Catholic Self-Reflection).¹⁰³ The conference delivered a statement about how the PCS can stimulate Old-Catholic self-reflection.¹⁰⁴ With relevance for my investigation, the Old-Catholic conference stated about the PCS that:¹⁰⁵

- I. In our exploration, we found the following points very helpful:
 1. The Church is described in essence as fellowship (*koinonia*).
 2. Unity is given a Christological and Trinitarian foundation.
 3. The Apostolicity of the Church is visible in the continuity of the Church's whole life.
 4. The continuity of ministry is regarded as being of particular importance, and not at least the historic episcopal succession.
 5. The office of bishop, as it serves unity, has a personal, collegial and communal dimension.
 6. Independent Episcopal Churches are moving towards greater commitment to fellowship and communion.
 7. Provision is made in the Porvoo Document for the creation of structures of common consultation.
- II. In order to move forward, the following points seem to require further clarification:
 1. The tension between the catholicity and independence of the local church.
 2. The very mention of local church without reference to its visibility in the Eucharist led by the bishop.
 3. The understanding of the one threefold ministry and Apostolic succession.
 4. The use of the term "sign".
 5. Theology and practice of liturgy, particular the Eucharist.
 6. The relationship of the Lutheran Porvoo Churches within the Lutheran World Federation and within their relationship with other reformed Churches (e.g. Leuenberg).

The statement was to a large degree a summary of the Old-Catholic theologian Martin Parmentier's lecture at the same conference. Parmentier noted that the starting point of the PCS is the sending of the church and its mission in the world, which is a perspective not traditionally emphasised in Old-Catholic theology, which instead sees apostolicity as episcopal succession.

¹⁰³ Theologians from the Old-Catholic, Anglican and Lutheran churches participated in the conference. Lectures from the conference were published the following year in Frei, 'Internationale Kirchliche Zeitschrift'.

¹⁰⁴ Ring and Berlis, 'Das Porvoo-Dokument Als Anregung Zu Altkatholischer Selbstreflektion', p4.

¹⁰⁵ Old Catholic 35th International Theological Conference 1999, 'The Porvoo Document as a Stimulus to Old-Catholic Self-Reflection', p6f; See also; Eßer, 'Ein Blick auf "Porvoo"', p10.

The *koinonia* and missionary motifs can be found in the dialogue between the Old-Catholic and the Orthodox churches.¹⁰⁶ The missionary perspective in the PCS is the basis for apostolicity in the PCS, which Parmentier found to lack “the inner side” of apostolicity.¹⁰⁷ This critique goes back to the dialogue between Old-Catholic and Orthodox churches:

The apostolic doctrine preserved by the Church is the inner aspect of its apostolicity. Its other element is the unbroken series and succession of pastors and teachers of the Church, starting from the apostles, which is the outward mark and also the pledge of the truth of the Church. These two elements of apostolicity, the inner and the outer, support and condition one another; if either one or the other is lacking the essential apostolicity and fullness of truth of the Church are impaired.¹⁰⁸

Considering the emphasis on the common faith in chapter three of the PCS, “What we agree in faith”, as well as the ministerial role of ordained ministry for right preaching and for the sacraments of the church, this critique is surprising. It is, however, also related to the eucharist and the catholicity of the church. The Old-Catholic theologian Günter Eßer found weaknesses in the catholicity concept contained in §48 of the PCS, since it does not emphasise that the local church is fully church. Important in this regard is the lack of a eucharistic perspective in the PCS – that the bishop is primarily the leader of the celebration of the eucharist. In the PCS the bishop is primarily the carrier of *episcopé* and supervision, which in the Old-Catholic perspective is necessary; but according to Eßer, the spiritual dimension of episcopacy fades into the background.¹⁰⁹

The Old-Catholic theologians affirmed the distinction between the apostolicity of the church as a whole and episcopal succession as congruent with Old-Catholic theology, in contrast to what they called the RC ‘pipeline’ theory.¹¹⁰ Parmentier noted that the PCS, based on BEM, distinguishes between *episcopé* and episcopacy, which might have suggested an openness to diverse forms of *episcopo*; but the PCS emphasises episcopacy as the form of *episcopé*. Parmentier understood this as expressing the fact that the Porvoo churches have always been episcopal. Instead of the pipeline theory, Parmentier notes that the PCS understands episcopal succession as a sign, albeit not a guarantee, which he saw as a tension derived from BEM.¹¹¹ Parmentier was critical of the sign theory, which he found unclear in its content, and was used “sometimes as a street-sign and sometimes as a sacramental con-

¹⁰⁶ Parmentier, ‘Die Altkatholische Ekklesiologie’, p33.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p33f; Eßer, ‘Ein Blick auf “Porvoo”’, p10.

¹⁰⁸ Old Catholic - Orthodox Conversations, ‘Ecclesiology’, p404.

¹⁰⁹ Eßer, ‘Ein Blick auf “Porvoo”’, p9. „Für eine Kirche katholischer Tradition gehört der bischöfliche Dienst konstitutiv zur Kirche”.

¹¹⁰ Parmentier, ‘Die Altkatholische Ekklesiologie’, p37; Eßer, ‘Ein Blick auf “Porvoo”’, p8.

¹¹¹ Parmentier, ‘Die Altkatholische Ekklesiologie’, p38.

cept (in this case more or less equivalent with the word ‘means’).¹¹² The tension in “sign but no guarantee” is understood by Parmentier as raising the old question: Is episcopacy *esse* or *bene esse* of the church? He asks:

In international ecumenism it is not usual anymore to ask if episcopacy belongs to the *esse* or to the *bene esse* of the church. ... Nevertheless, you may ask whether Porvoo has not in fact opted for episcopacy as *bene esse*, since episcopacy is said to be only one of several signs of the apostolicity of the church.¹¹³

Parmentier did not elaborate further on the difference between what he called the RC pipeline understanding of episcopacy and the Old-Catholic understanding of episcopacy as a part of the church’s *esse*, and the necessity of ordination in episcopal succession. In the perspective of the Old-Catholic ecclesiology and its stress on the local church,¹¹⁴ the Porvoo solution was understood as an emphasis on the local church and on the historical see as the bearer of apostolic continuity, even in those cases where there had been a break in the episcopal line of ordination. At the same time, it was asked whether this really was a theologically sound solution, since *successio sedis* has to be held together with *successio manuum*.¹¹⁵

Parmentier stated that the concept *full communion* is used as the way to attain the goal, which is *full visible unity*,¹¹⁶ but also that the concept of unity in the PCS is not clear. He asked further how the Lutheran Porvoo-churches affirming the PCS theology of the local church and episcopacy relate to Lutheran churches that deny such an ecclesiology. He thus found tensions between Porvoo and Leuenberg and the Lutheran churches engaged in one or the other, or both. Another such uncertainty is why the Lutheran churches in Porvoo are not in communion with all the Anglican churches, but only with some, which after all share the same faith.¹¹⁷ Parmentier’s remark is even more relevant since 2016, considering that the Old Catholic Church and the

¹¹² Ibid., p48f. „...manchmal wie ein Strassenschild verwendet, manchmal aber fast wie ein sakramentaler Begriff (in diesem Falle mehr oder wenig äquivalent mit dem Wort ‚Mittel‘).”

¹¹³ Ibid., p45. „In der internationale Ökumene ist es nicht inzwischen nicht mehr üblich zu fragen, ob das Bischofsamt zum *esse* oder zum *bene esse* der Kirche gehöre. ... Allerdings kann man sich fragen, ob man in Porvoo nicht de facto für das *bene esse* des Bischofsamtes optiert hat, weil das Bischofsamt nur noch eines von mehreren Zeichen der Apostolizität der Kirche genannt wird.”

¹¹⁴ The *Ortskirchenekklesiologie* (ecclesiology of the local church) is a special issue in the Old-Catholic self-understanding, which regards the Catholic Church as the local church, i.e. the diocese, regardless of whether it consists of one community or a smaller or larger number of parishes. Each local church constitutes the entire people of God in its area or place (*Ort*). This emphasis should be seen in the perspective of the ecclesiological development of the RCC after 1870. See further, Ploeger, ‘Catholicity, Apostolicity, the Trinity and the Eucharist in Old Catholic Ecclesiology’, p10f.

¹¹⁵ Parmentier, ‘Die Altkatholische Ekklesiologie’, p47ff.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., p43f, 49.

¹¹⁷ Eßer, ‘Ein Blick auf “Porvoo”’, p9.

CoS have been in a relationship of communion similar to Porvoo since that year.¹¹⁸

6.4. Roman Catholic evaluations of the PCS

The RC policy is to offer official responses only to ecumenical dialogues in which she is involved. Consequently, she gave no formal response to the PCS. The closest to an official response to the PCS came from the Franciscan Henrik Roelvink, previously the chairman of the Ecumenical Council of the RCC in Sweden, who participated in the work of the Porvoo Conversations as RC observer.¹¹⁹ Roelvink contributed to the process, after the PCS had been published, through six articles; and he also gave lectures about the PCS. In essence, Roelvink was positive about the solution presented in the PCS, but he also made some critical remarks. One of his articles may be seen as a contribution to the reception process in the CoN. In this article Roelvink argued for the theology of Porvoo and for a positive reception.¹²⁰ During his time as observer, Roelvink regularly wrote reports to the Vatican about the Porvoo debate and its progress, but since these are confidential, it has not been possible to take them into account.¹²¹ One of Roelvink's articles has been influential in international interpretations of the PCS,¹²² and in the RC reception of the PCS this article has played an interesting role. RC theologians evaluating the PCS positively referred to it,¹²³ while RC theologians who were mainly critical did not.¹²⁴ Roelvink's article was also quoted in the CoE Porvoo debate by Bishop Hind and Donald Allchin.¹²⁵

Below I will describe the RC reactions thematically, covering: 1. Communion, apostolicity, and episcopal succession in the PCS. 2. Episcopacy:

¹¹⁸ CoS and Old Catholic Church, 'Utrecht and Uppsala on the Way to Communion'.

¹¹⁹ In the preparations for the *Porvoo Conversations*, the importance of RC participation as observers was emphasised. In particular, Bishop Tustin emphasised that it would be preferable if two RC observers participated in the discussion; one from the Nordic countries and one from Great Britain. The commission invited the RC Bishops' conferences of Wales and England and of the Nordic countries to appoint their observers to the commission's work. The RC bishop of Stockholm appointed Roelvink for the task. In England the ecumenical officer, Vincent Nichols, later Archbishop of Westminster, was appointed. However, Nichols was unable to attend the first session, and was later appointed an assistant bishop. In the end he was never able to participate, and the Bishops' conference of Wales and England preferred to receive all the documents rather than to send an observer. Roelvink, 'Letter to the Author'; see also *Together in Mission and Ministry*, p36.

¹²⁰ Roelvink, 'Porvoo-avtaalen og norsk økumenikk'.

¹²¹ Roelvink, 'Letter to the Author'.

¹²² Roelvink, 'The Apostolic Succession in the PCS'.

¹²³ John J. Burkhard, Lorelei F. Fuchs.

¹²⁴ Edward Yarnold, Charles Morerod, Georg Tavard and Francis A. Sullivan.

¹²⁵ Speech by bishop John Hind, in; CoE, General Synod, 'General Synod 1994', p214; Allchin, 'The Porvoo Leap'.

Necessary or not? 3. Sacramental Church. 4. Some further critique of the PCS.

6.4.1. Communion, apostolicity, and succession in the PCS

In his presentation on the PCS, Roelvink described its fourth chapter, *Episcopacy in the Service of the Apostolicity of the Church*, as “Porvoo’s decisive contribution to Christianity”.¹²⁶ RC theologian John J. Burkhard stated that “Porvoo represents a culmination to date of recent discussions regarding apostolicity inasmuch as it draws widely from earlier bilateral and multilateral statements. ... It has offered the most concentrated theological focus on apostolicity and apostolic succession, and for this reason deserves careful study.”¹²⁷ Fuchs said that the PCS “takes existing consensus between the partner churches and transform them into concrete ecclesiological fellowship, fellowship manifested in word, sacrament, mission and ministry. Consequently, one finds in the Porvoo Common Statement diverse *koinōn*-terms to describe church and its unity and the nature of this relationship: fellowship, communion, sharing, participation.”¹²⁸

Fuchs understood church and unity in the PCS relationally. The unity of the church is grounded in the relationship and the unity of the Trinity. As there is undivided unity and at the same time diversity within the Trinity, it is analogically in the Church: “The church and its unity is created; the Trinity and its unity is uncreated.”¹²⁹ The full communion of the church is not an abstract description, but is realised in a visible communion and unity in “word, sacrament, mission and ministry” given in diversity. Fuchs further noted that unity in the PCS is related to the church’s missionary and sacramental character, and exists for the sake of the unity of the world. It is on this basis that the PCS aims to overcome its main obstacle to unity: apostolic succession.

Roelvink noted that the PCS does not link apostolic succession exclusively to the manual episcopal succession, but sees the primary manifestation of apostolic succession to be found in the apostolic tradition of the whole Church.¹³⁰ Like Fuchs, Burkhard described this as Porvoo understanding apostolicity and succession in relational terms. The priority is “with the apostolicity of the whole church, but that priority is embodied in a variety of historical expressions, including episcopacy, that relationally co-determine

¹²⁶ Roelvink, ‘Borgåöverenskommelsen sedd med katolska ögon’, p11.

¹²⁷ Burkhard, *Apostolicity Then And Now*, p193; Cf. also; VanderWilt, *Communion with Non-Catholic Christians*, p86f.

¹²⁸ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p296.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Roelvink, ‘Borgåöverenskommelsen sedd med katolska ögon’, p11f; Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p346f; Roelvink, ‘The Borgå/Porvoo Agreement: Possibilities and Difficulties’, p11f.

apostolicity”.¹³¹ Roelvink and Burkhard emphasised the consistency of this understanding with RC theology, which since Vatican II has seen ministry and episcopal succession to be dependent in its essence on what the Church is.¹³² There were also RC theologians who were severely critical of the Porvoo solution – as the next section shows.

6.4.2. Episcopacy: Necessary or not?

While RC theologians in general agreed with the ecclesiological perspective of the PCS, those who were critical criticised primarily two issues:

1. The Porvoo description of the divine institution of an ordained ministry was affirmed, but its threefold form and *personal* exercise were found to be much more contingent, “however ancient and useful it may be”.¹³³ They did not find clarity in the PCS about whether or not episcopal succession and the bishop’s office are considered to be necessary.
2. The Porvoo solution of accepting an occasional presbyteral ordination as valid, despite the fact that there had been a break in episcopal succession, and despite the fact that the PCS regards episcopal ordination as an effective sacramental sign.

The Swiss Dominican Charles Morerod, at that time general secretary of the RC *International Theological Commission* and consultant to the RC *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*, later bishop, noted that:

The dialogue between Anglicans and Lutherans insists on the fact that the episcopate should not be isolated from the entirety of ecclesiology, and that it is not enough to have bishops for the apostolic faith to be maintained. This is also the [Roman] catholic position, but that does not mean that the episcopate is not necessary. When Vatican II affirms that “*Every legitimate celebration of the Eucharist is regulated by the bishop*”, it is not claiming that the presence of a bishop is enough on its own to maintain the apostolic faith, but it affirms that without a bishop there is not the completeness of the Church, as there is not the Eucharist.¹³⁴

As we saw in the chapter about the English Porvoo debate, this was also a question for Yarnold, who stated that “I am glad to acknowledge that the drafters of Porvoo made an effort not to contradict ARCIC, but although I

¹³¹ Burkhard, *Apostolicity Then And Now*, p195; See also; Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p297.

¹³² Cf. Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p349; See also Burkhard who quotes Roelvink; Burkhard, *Apostolicity Then And Now*, p196.

¹³³ Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p102; See also; Morerod, ‘Réflexions sur l’Accord de Porvoo’.

¹³⁴ Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p112.

have looked again and again, I cannot see that they were successful”.¹³⁵ According to the RC critiques, the PCS represents an Anglican change from a sacramental and ontological understanding of office to a functional understanding of office – with consequences for ecclesiology. According to Morerod, the Anglican church through Porvoo has really taken a new step that might be a break with its earlier traditional understanding of ministry and succession.¹³⁶ Morerod emphasised the difference between an Anglican view of threefold ministry as a gift from God, and, as he described it, the Lutheran view of it as a practical arrangement and not necessary for the unity of the church. He found evidence for this discrepancy in the respective churches’ responses to BEM. Morerod noted that some of the Lutheran churches involved regard episcopacy as a gift from God, although not as *iure divino*, since “the Lord has not set the rules and regulated the institutions *a priori*, but left it to the Holy Spirit to develop them over the centuries”.¹³⁷ He stated further that:

One sign appears to us disturbing: the present concept of the episcopate among the Nordic Lutherans is above all functional. In their view, the episcopate is useful, but not indispensable: only faith and grace are necessary for salvation, which from the Lutheran point of view, prevents one from considering the episcopate to be necessary within the economy of salvation. The Danish refusal to sign Porvoo is also the result of a divergence at this level.¹³⁸

Morerod said that “in wishing to renew the vision of the apostolic succession, Porvoo risks losing the sense of a certain materiality of the life of the Church, which is linked to the historicity of the ministry”.¹³⁹ Simultaneously he noted that, in the perspective of the church as an eschatological reality, the emphasis on the sacramental line of ordinations is not necessarily mechanical. There might have been problems in the history of the ordinations of some of the church’s bishops, such as in the intention or reception of an ordination. However, the principal of *ecclesia supplet* frees the church from that kind of hesitation. In contrast to Roelvink and Fuchs, Morerod did not apply this principle to the Porvoo churches,¹⁴⁰ but emphasised the necessity of manual episcopal succession. Without further reasoning, he stated that

¹³⁵ Yarnold, ‘A Word in Due Season’, p935f.; See also Yarnold, ‘In Line with the Apostles’, p879; Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*, p6f.

¹³⁶ Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p103.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p109ff; Morerod, ‘Réflexions sur l’Accord de Porvoo’, p80ff.

¹³⁸ Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p118, see also p112.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p119. Morerod’s statement is not consistent with the joint understanding of episcopacy and ecclesiology in LRCDS, *The Office of Bishop*; LRCDS, *Kyrkan som sakrament*; Neither with; LRCDSF, *Justification in the Life of the Church*. The three documents demonstrate a great deal of mutual understanding of ecclesiology and episcopacy. This reveals a tension and a development in the churches after BEM in 1983.

¹⁴⁰ For a further discussion about *ecclesia supplet*, see chapter 14.3.1.

“Lutheran theology is resistant to such historical and material conditioning, which is seen as a limitation put on divine liberty”,¹⁴¹ and:

As long as episcopal ordination is seen as an optional occurrence, on a par with the good functioning of Church life, one can remain perturbed about the underlying comprehension of the life of the Church. And this question is not resolved simply by the good faith of the persons concerned.¹⁴²

George Tavad, former member of several RC ecumenical dialogues, also claimed that episcopal succession is optional in the PCS and that “in Scandinavia and the Baltic churches ... no church would be committed to an eventual alteration of its present form of ordination”.¹⁴³ This interpretation stands in contradiction to the PCS, which states in §57 “that the time has come when all our churches can affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic succession”. In §58b(vi) it is stated that the Porvoo churches commit themselves “to invite one another’s Bishops normally to participate in the laying on of hands at the ordination of Bishops as a sign of the unity and continuity of the church”.

Morerod read the PCS with some preconceptions that determined his interpretation: 1. He describes not only the PCS but also Meissen, the Concordat of Agreement, CCM, and Waterloo. Although all of those agreements – except for Meissen, which also includes Reformed and United churches – are between Anglican and Lutheran churches, they rest upon different presuppositions. The solution suggested in the PCS is therefore not automatically transferable beyond the Northern-European context. 2. He made an important point that the Porvoo churches reacted differently towards episcopacy in BEM. Nevertheless, BEM was formative for the description of episcopacy and episcopal succession in the PCS. He noted that the Lutheran churches, in their response to BEM, stated that episcopacy and the threefold ministry are “precious (‘valuable’), but not indispensable”,¹⁴⁴ while the Anglican churches appreciated in particular BEM’s emphasis on episcopacy and the threefold ministry. However, it is exactly this difference that the PCS claims to have overcome through its deeper understanding and emphasis on threefold ministry as “an expression of the unity we seek and also a means for achieving it”,¹⁴⁵ a formulation taken from BEM. It seems that Morerod did not sufficiently consider the forward-looking perspective of the PCS and the fact that it is a dynamic agreement aimed at the transformation and change of the churches involved, and that this is based on the claim of a deeper ecclesiology embracing the issue of episcopal succession. Nor did he

¹⁴¹ Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p120.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ Tavad, ‘A Catholic Reflection on the Porvoo Statement’, p355.

¹⁴⁴ Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p109.

¹⁴⁵ PCS §32j, with a quote from BEM M§22.

seem to consider the differences between different Lutheran churches over the visibility of the church and how they relate to ecclesiology and ordained ministry. Nevertheless, his critique challenges the Porvoo churches to a faithful reception of, and renewal into, the communion they have approved. 3. A third principle that determined Morerod's interpretation was the question about the validity of orders.

Validity of orders was also the concern for Yarnold, Francis A. Sullivan, and Tavard. Tavard summarised the content of the PCS as:

An implicit distinction between the ordinary minister of the conferral of episcopacy, who is undoubtedly already a bishop and an extraordinary minister, who would be a presbyter. According to the Porvoo statement, however, the extraordinary minister of episcopal ordination would be an ordained minister (presbyter, priest) who in extraordinary circumstances would be qualified to ordain a bishop. Given the extraordinary circumstances and the ordainer's intention to confer the episcopate on the ordinand for the welfare of the church in a given area, there would be a presumption of validity.¹⁴⁶

Like Tavard the RC theologian Francis A. Sullivan discussed if it was possible for a bishop to be ordained by persons who themselves were not bishops. In two articles on the Anglican-Lutheran dialogues, he asked whether the Porvoo model would be acceptable from a RC perspective, and answered that, even though:

There is good evidence that on occasion popes have authorized priests to ordain priests, it is not merely a matter of canon law but a matter of doctrine for the [Roman] Catholic Church that bishops must be ordained by bishops in the apostolic succession. Perhaps the future will bring some solution to this problem, but for the present it seems that the path that Anglicans have taken in reaching full communion ... is not one that the [Roman] Catholic Church could follow.¹⁴⁷

Tavard likewise emphasised that the issue is primarily about theology, not mere canon law:

The problem, however, is more than canonical. Theologically one must ask: can an order be transmitted by someone who does not have it? Would the extraordinary conditions of the sixteenth century in the northern communities justify the view that, in Roman Catholic categories, the principle, *Ecclesia supplet*, was at work in the presbyteral ordinations of bishops? The principle, however, finds its normal use in cases in which essential parts of the rite or essential conditions of validity were omitted or overlooked by inadvertence. And this was not the case in the sixteenth century. Even when recourse to a

¹⁴⁶ Tavard, 'A Catholic Reflection on the Porvoo Statement', p352f. This interpretation by Tavard was criticised by the American Lutheran theologians Root and Rusch, 'Lutheran Reflections on the Porvoo Statement', p358f.

¹⁴⁷ Sullivan, 'Dialogues and Agreements', p24; see also; Sullivan, 'Comments of a Roman Catholic', p11.

bishop was impossible, the decision to go ahead with presbyteral ordinations of bishops was indeed deliberate.¹⁴⁸

Tavard came to the conclusion that the solution in the PCS is not theologically possible. The RC theologian William Henn was more positive to the PCS. In a closing lecture at a conference about the PCS in Farfa in 1996, he highlighted PCS §52, which states that the signatory churches are free to acknowledge the respective ministry of those churches, and stated:

The Porvoo Statement suggests that communities of both sides would be *free* to take these steps, seemingly on the basis of two affirmations: first that ‘episcopal succession does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission’ (PCS 51) and, secondly, that ‘faithfulness to the apostolic calling of the whole Church is carried by more than one means of continuity’ (PCS 52). These affirmations weaken the case for episcopal succession. ... Still ... episcopal succession is not merely optional, in that ‘the retention of the sign [of episcopal succession] remains a permanent challenge to fidelity and to unity, summons to witness to, and a commission to realize more fully, the permanent characteristics of the church of the Apostles’ (PCS 51). The acceptance of these affirmations would seem to be the condition for that *freedom* about which the Porvoo Statement speaks. But one point seems to call for further clarification. ... Is the *freedom* about which Porvoo speaks really conditioned on a prior supposition that episcopal succession is not strictly speaking, necessary for apostolic continuity?¹⁴⁹

Henn approached the problem to solve in the PCS from various angles and came to the conclusion, which strengthens the Porvoo case, that:

It would seem that, even if episcopal succession were discerned to be part of God’s will for the Church and so a necessary component of apostolic continuity, this would not *ipso facto* compel a complete rejection by episcopal churches of the apostolicity of the ministry of non-episcopal churches or *ipso facto* imply that the only way in which non-episcopal churches could adopt an episcopal structure would amount to a repudiation of their ministerial heritage. These would seem to be extreme conclusions which do not recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit acting in all of the still divided Christian communities. But the Porvoo Statement about *freedom* certainly has taken the discussion a step forward by bringing into sharper focus this question of the Church’s freedom concerning ministerial structures in such a way which challenges all within the ecumenical community to consider it at greater length.¹⁵⁰

As noted, Morerod, Yarnold, Tavard, and Sullivan did not consider this freedom to be possible. However, while those theologians argued from a tradi-

¹⁴⁸ Tavard, ‘A Catholic Reflection on the Porvoo Statement’, p355. Cf. Chapter 14.3.1.

¹⁴⁹ Henn, ‘Concluding Reflections to the Symposium’, p188f.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p191.

tional emphasis on the validity of ministry and episcopal succession as the laying on of hands in canonical perspective, the PCS view is different.¹⁵¹ In summary, Morerod asked: “is there not behind Porvoo a too human view of the unity of Christians, tainted with impatience and having recourse to procedures which have been tried out on the political plane?”¹⁵² In contrast, Fuchs stated that “nothing in the Porvoo accord suggests a design by diplomacy method prompted by the ecclesio-political settings of the region. Its approach is ecclesiological, even sacramental, not political or bureaucratic.”¹⁵³

Henn, Puglisi, Fuchs, and Roelvink delivered a more ecclesiological based approach to the PCS, and focused less on the question of validity. Henn and Puglisi wished for a more elaborated eschatological understanding of ecclesiology and ordained ministry in the PCS. Both asked, with reference to Metropolitan John Zizioulas,¹⁵⁴ if the understanding of apostolicity in Porvoo is not too one-dimensional, focusing on a linear-historical conception at the same time as losing the eschatological perspective. Such a perspective could have given the Porvoo agreement a less mechanical approach to apostolic succession, and helped it not to isolate the episcopate from the community.¹⁵⁵ Puglisi noted that, although the PCS integrates much of the progress that has been expressed by BEM:

There still seems to be a hesitation in expressing the necessity of the episcopal ministry – for reasons that go beyond the practical level of ‘coordination.’ There seems to be much concern about establishing the ‘historical’ continuity and not enough about the Christological and pneumatological dimensions of the episcopal ministry ... [and] the continuity of Eucharistic communities. ... If this were taken more seriously into consideration, the question of in or out of succession might be more easily resolved; the question would not end up by trying to trace the unbroken chain of imposition of hands with a search for a valid pedigree. Apostolicity depends on other elements that have to do with the community’s faith and practice and not just that of the holder of an office, even though the latter is important.¹⁵⁶

Roelvink and Fuchs did not deal explicitly with the eschatological question, but understood the PCS to overcome the differences about episcopal succession and the question of validity through an ecclesiological and sacramental understanding formalised in the *ecclesia supplet* principle.

¹⁵¹ Cf. Root and Rusch, ‘Lutheran Reflections on the Porvoo Statement’, p358f.

¹⁵² Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p122.

¹⁵³ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p302.

¹⁵⁴ Zizioulas, ‘Apostolic Continuity’, p153ff.

¹⁵⁵ Henn, ‘Concluding Reflections to the Symposium’, p190; Puglisi, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p229.

¹⁵⁶ Puglisi, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p229.

6.4.3. The sacramentality of the Church

Roelvink said that the PCS was a result of “new thinking on the apostolic succession ... with far-reaching conclusions” for the churches involved.¹⁵⁷ According to Roelvink, the new thinking, in essence was to approach the question of episcopal succession from a sacramental ecclesiological perspective and not from the question of validity or by focusing on the individual office bearer.¹⁵⁸ Roelvink stated that the reason that the question of apostolicity is so important “is simply the desire to be absolutely sure that salvation which is offered is exactly the salvation which Jesus Christ gives us”. This “requires that the *Church as a whole* be true to the apostolic faith and to the apostolic rules which govern sacraments and church order”.¹⁵⁹ For this reason it must be assessed which elements are necessary for the Church’s apostolicity, some of which the PCS lists in its second and third chapters on Church and faith. Roelvink stated that, to be complete, those elements “have to express the living fullness of the Church in the areas of faith, sacraments, and visible organisation”. With regard to episcopal ministry, he stated that:

There is a specifically needed communion with other bishops (who represent the whole Church), right teaching about ministry, and the right process of election, appointment and consecration of new bishops. If any of those is defective, it is a likely indication that other necessary elements may also be defective and, consequently, the grace of salvation may not be totally according to Christ’s will.

In Roman Catholic and Orthodox traditions, the worldwide collegiality of bishops has always functioned as the final guarantee for the continuity of the Church both in time and space. It has been possible for individual bishops and even whole church provinces to fall out of the frame. But the Church as a whole (according to the Catholic view, concretely an ecumenical council assembled around the successor of Peter) has, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, always been faithful to the Lord and able to mediate the fullness of salvation. The same thoughts but without their visible concreteness around the see of Rome, lie behind the Porvoo Statement’s stress on the apostolicity of the whole Church.¹⁶⁰

Roelvink said that, like the PCS, RC theology also “sees apostolic succession in a strict sense as one of many signs of the apostolicity of the Church”.¹⁶¹ In his evaluation, Roelvink emphasised the sacramental character of ecclesiology and ministry in the PCS, even though the word itself is not used:

¹⁵⁷ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p344.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p348.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p347.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p347f.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., p349.

The sacramental reality is there, but the technical term is not used. It says that ‘the Church is sent into the world as a sign, instrument and foretaste of... the Kingdom of God’ (18, also 20, 22). In ecumenical texts today this is the usual way to describe the thought of Vatican II when the Council described the Church ‘in the nature of sacrament – a sign and instrument’ (*Constitution on the Church*, 1). When the Porvoo text formulates ordination, it also expresses a basic sacramental view (41, third sentence, even 48). This is repeated when talking about the content of the laying on of hands, the accompanying and explanatory prayers and the will to repeat what the apostles did, i.e. *materia, forma* and *intentio* (47f).¹⁶²

On episcopal ministry, Roelvink wrote further:

In the person of the bishop ‘the presence of Christ among his people’ is noted (44). In the ordination of priests and consecration of bishops, hands are laid upon the one who is ordained, in confidence in Christ’s promise to pour out the Holy Spirit on the ordinand (47). The sign of laying on of hands is said to be effective in four ways, one of which is that ‘it transmits ministerial office and its authority’ (48).¹⁶³

With this in mind, the Porvoo solution sounds very much like a contradiction: on the one hand it emphasises the sacramental nature of the church and the ordained ministry, and on the other hand it foresees the possibility of a presbyterally-ordained bishop. This is the critique of Morerod, Sullivan, Yarnold, and Tavad. Roelvink noticed that the traditional focus when it comes to ‘right’ bishops is *validity* of ordinations according to juridical categories, as in the 16th and 17th centuries – or as in the 19th century, up to the present, when the emphasis has been to proceed from the parts to the whole:

When the chain of persons who ordain with the right *materia* (laying on of hands), the right *forma* (ordination prayer) and the right *intentio* (‘to do what the Church does’) has been seen as an absolute condition for valid apostolic succession. Instead we are to think ecclesilogically and start with the apostolicity of the Church and its essential life. By way of the different expressions of the apostolic character of the faith, the sacraments and the ministry in general, we arrive at the analysis of the historical episcopal succession.¹⁶⁴

Roelvink described the argumentation in the PCS in these terms:¹⁶⁵

1. Ordination in episcopal succession is seen as an effective sign of the continuity of the whole Church.
2. Simultaneously the sign is in itself not a guarantee of the fidelity of a bishop or groups of bishops.¹⁶⁶

¹⁶² Ibid., p351.

¹⁶³ Ibid., p347.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p348.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p347ff; Roelvink, ‘Borgåöverenskommelsen - Möjligheter och svårigheter’, p119; Roelvink, ‘The Borgå/Porvoo Agreement: Possibilities and Difficulties’, p12.

3. The two factors in (1) and (2) are kept together in the Porvoo solution, understood as an *ecclesia supplet* solution. Those Porvoo churches that have not preserved episcopal succession have nevertheless not lost the apostolic ministry, since there are many signs of apostolic continuity. Through those arguments, the differences between the three groups of churches are overcome and the churches can enrich each other “with those signs which hitherto only existed in some of them”.¹⁶⁷

Through the Church as a whole we have the guarantee of our salvation. Therefore we have to be sure that the fullness of the Church does not show essential defects. Discussion about the Reformation is therefore fundamentally a discussion about what happened to the Church as a whole. The breach in the sixteenth century was not primarily about individual consecrations, but was a split in the whole body of the Church, which in turn also led to a break in the succession of consecrations or, perhaps better, some aspects of the apostolic succession. But this means also that if defects have arisen in elements of apostolic continuity, these defects can be ‘complemented’ within the wholeness of the Church without especially dramatic measures. Formal unity can then be restored primarily by the enrichment of one Church with the goods that others have, followed by the recognition of each other as sister Churches, rather than by accepting the validity of each individual consecration from the past.¹⁶⁸

In contrast to Roelvink Cardinal Walter Kasper did not find the ecclesiology of the PCS to be possible. He identified and described the PCS as an example of an ecclesiology of fundamentals, which establishes agreement in the fundamental articles of faith, but does not address so called adiaphora. In consequence this means a separation between content and the official form of the Church in the episcopal office, an understanding which, according to Kasper, is not possible for Orthodox or Roman Catholics.¹⁶⁹ However, if Kasper’s identification of the PCS as an ecclesiology of fundamentals had been right, the PCS would have been fully satisfying for Protestant readers, which, as we have seen, it was not. Instead the PCS means a settlement with an ecclesiology of fundamentals or essentials. I will come back to this issue in due course.¹⁷⁰

¹⁶⁷ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p348; See also; Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p302. Fuchs relates *ecclesia supplet* to the “notion of intention. ... The intention was to confer the episcopacy and so remain in apostolic continuity during and after difficult historical situations.”

¹⁶⁸ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p348f.

¹⁶⁹ Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p308.

¹⁷⁰ See further in Chapter 7.4 and Chapter 10.2.

6.4.4. Further critique of the PCS

Like Morerod, Roelvink stated that there is a hesitation in the PCS about using sacramental language. He noted that the RCC, in common with the Anglican Communion, adopts the incarnational principle; but some of the Lutheran representatives wanted to avoid the term ‘sacrament’ during the Porvoo Conversations. In an earlier draft of the statement, the concept of ‘sacrament’ was used, but it was removed because “Lutherans find it difficult to see the work of God in and through sinful human beings, insofar as the effect of salvation in the form of human holiness and instrumentality is not stressed in their spirituality”.¹⁷¹ Since the sacramental reality is clearly expressed in the PCS in the same way as in *Lumen Gentium*, although the term ‘sacrament’ is not used, Roelvink said:

In my opinion, what is decisive for [Roman] Catholics is not terminology but content. That the sacramental reality is described in other terms is not so much an indication that there is another teaching, but rather that there is another spirituality. Only if the participants of the Porvoo Statement rejected the sacrament as such, or had other fundamentally divergent standpoints, would this position become a hindrance for unity with our Church.¹⁷²

Fuchs also noticed this hesitation in some Lutheran circles, even though it is in contrast to Apology 13, in which Philipp Melanchthon states that “we are not unwilling to call ordination a sacrament”.¹⁷³

Several RC theologians asked how the unity and communion of Porvoo should function in practice.¹⁷⁴ Roelvink noted with satisfaction that the PCS “refers directly, though not specifically, to the need for oversight also on the universal level of Church life”.¹⁷⁵ The PCS is thus open to a theology of the universal church, but it remains vague, which raises questions: Is the church a universal church, visible regionally and locally, or is the Church a federation of churches growing from the local to the regional and universal? And how would the new communion be administered legally, and how does it relate to the need of a universally unifying office and the Petrine office? The statement never really speaks of how the Porvoo Communion will be administered and organised. It speaks of episcopal ministry as exercised personally, collegially, and communally at local, regional, and universal levels of the Church’s life. It never specifies what this new collegiality will mean concretely across confessional and national borders. Rather, what seems to be described, according to Roelvink, is a spiritualised and non-material collegi-

¹⁷¹ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p351; For a different Lutheran perspective beyond stereotypes see; Brodd, ‘The Church as Sacrament in the Writings of Yngve Brilioth’; LRCDS, *Kyrkan som sakrament*.

¹⁷² Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p352.

¹⁷³ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p303, note 221.

¹⁷⁴ Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p120ff.

¹⁷⁵ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p346f.

ality without any legal consequences.¹⁷⁶ The concept of ‘catholicity’ in the PCS should therefore be developed and clarified more.

Roelvink also criticised the use of history in the PCS, and particular Reformation history, as too one-sided. Reformation history is positively emphasised as a renewal of Church life, but the PCS is silent about the fact that the Reformation also “radically broke the *unity* of the western Church”, and he stated that “sometimes the essays go even further and give not only one-sided but even incorrect historical information, especially about the Danish development”.¹⁷⁷

Taken as a whole the RC evaluations were ecclesologically closer to the PCS than Protestant responses. As with the Protestant discussion, opinions were divided as to whether the Porvoo solution is possible or not. Important issues in the centre of the RC critique were episcopacy as necessary or not, validity of orders, ecclesia supplet and the importance of eschatology for those questions. Further issues concerned the practical implementation and deficiencies regarding the PCS’s understanding of the catholicity and materiality of the Church. I will come back to an analysis of those questions in Part III.

6.5. Orthodox evaluations of the PCS

In 1994 the Permanent Delegate of the Ecumenical Patriarchate to the WCC, Grand Protopresbyter Georges Tssetsis, informed the assistant General Secretary of the LWF, Eugene L. Brand, that he had translated a great part of the PCS and briefed the Ecumenical Patriarch on it.¹⁷⁸ The letter was forwarded to the Primates of the Porvoo Churches.¹⁷⁹ In his response to Porvoo, Tssetsis emphasised that from a wider ecumenical perspective the PCS has the utmost significance, which Patriarch Bartholomaios followed with great interest. This interest followed an ecumenical principle that had characterised the Orthodox Church of Constantinople since the World Conference of Faith & Order in Lausanne in 1927. The principle was formulated by Metropolitan Germanos of Thyateira, who stated that “before any attempt at a general reunion of the churches, the attention of the Ecumenical movement ought to be turned to reunion between churches having the same roots and the same

¹⁷⁶ Roelvink, ‘Borgåöverenskommelsen sedd med katolska ögon’, p343; Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p350f; See also; Morerod, ‘Réflexions sur l’Accord de Porvoo’, p98ff; Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p101; Puglisi, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p225; Raem, ‘Leuenberg, Meissen und Porvoo’, p181f.

¹⁷⁷ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p253; See also; Wainwright, ‘Is Episcopal Succession a Matter of Dogma for Anglicans?’, p169f.

¹⁷⁸ Tssetsis, ‘Letter from Gr. Prot. Georges Tssetsis to the Ass. Gen. Secr. of the LWF Eugene L. Brand about the PCS’.

¹⁷⁹ Brand, ‘Letter from Ass. Gen. Secr. of the LWF to the Primates of the Porvoo Churches’.

church ethos, so that such partial unions might serve eventually as the basis for the union of all Christian churches”.¹⁸⁰

So far there have been few responses to the PCS from Orthodox churches. The first doctoral thesis about the PCS was written by an Orthodox theologian, who analysed the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue, including the PCS, from an Orthodox perspective.¹⁸¹ In this section I will investigate the critique of Orthodox theologians, delivered at ecumenical conferences and in articles. On a proposal of the *Conference of European Churches* (CEC), an unofficial theological dialogue between the Porvoo Communion and the Orthodox Churches was initiated through two conferences in 2005 and 2008.¹⁸²

Bouteneff said that the PCS testifies to a branch-theory ecclesiology. In its 19th century Anglican origins, the branch-theory stated that to be a branch of the *Una sancta* a church must have continued “to hold the faith of the original ‘undivided’ church, and that they maintained ‘apostolic succession’ of their bishops”.¹⁸³ Important for this understanding of the branch-theory, according to Bouteneff, is its emphasis on the visibility of the church. This is emphasised in the PCS in combination with an ecclesiology of *koinonia*. The PCS, according to Bouteneff, thereby avoids interpreting the concept of *koinonia* as a merely spiritualised concept, since such a reading misses the essentials of the concept. Such spiritualised reading has been common in the ecumenical movement. Bouteneff added:

Once you invoke the idea of ‘visible unity,’ it is asserted, you are assuming that an *invisible* unity already exists among all Christians (here is the link with *koinonia*, and with the ‘branch-theory’, broadly understood). This invisible unity only needs to be uncovered, made visible, through ‘denominational adjustments’ (not through the renunciation or alteration of doctrine of practice), or through simply opening one’s eyes to *recognize* the church outside one’s own ecclesiastical borders.¹⁸⁴

Bouteneff noted that the PCS uses the concepts of *koinonia* and *visible unity* in this way.¹⁸⁵ Orthodox responses stated that, through the PCS, no obstacles remain to hinder the union of the Porvoo churches as a single church body, but “yet one gets the impression that these churches, for well understood

¹⁸⁰ Tsetsis, ‘Leuenberg, Meissen Und Porvoo’, p185; Cf. Tsetsis, ‘Letter from Gr. Prot. Georges Tsetsis to the Ass. Gen. Secr. of the LWF Eugene L. Brand about the PCS’.

¹⁸¹ Tudorie, *Dialogul teologic anglicano-luteran. Acordul bisericesc Porvoo (perspectiva ortodoxa)* [*The Porvoo Common Statement (Orthodox point of view)*].

¹⁸² The conferences were held in Järvenpää (Finland), 1-4 December 2005, and in Brâncoveanu Monastery/Sâmbâta de Sus (Romania), 27-30 March 2008. Both meetings invited observers from the Community of Protestant Churches (CPCE), the Armenian Apostolic Church, and the ELCD (at that time not part of the Porvoo Communion). For documentation, see *Reseptio* 1/2006 and *Reseptio* 1/2009.

¹⁸³ Bouteneff, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p236f.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p238.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p239.

historical and affective reasons, are not ready to give up their confessional identity easily for the sake of a united Church".¹⁸⁶

The Orthodox theologian Ionut Alexandru Tudorie said that the PCS is an example of the doctrinal syncretistic method elaborated in BEM, mixing Lutheran and Anglican confessions, and a relativising of the normative character of episcopal succession. He found this approach problematic because "in the church there is both an external transmission of revealed teachings and an internal transmission of the gift of hierarchy".¹⁸⁷ Like the American Lutheran critique, Tudorie's evaluation was confessionally static, and did not consider the history and identities of the Porvoo churches, nor the background of the PCS. As described in chapter two, the background and the prerequisite for the PCS were the close relations between the Porvoo churches and their intermingled history even before the PCS. Tudorie did not reflect upon the doctrinal agreement in earlier ecumenical documents, nor the role of renewal in the PCS. He found it problematic that the PCS only values episcopal succession as an outward sign of the church's apostolicity,¹⁸⁸ but did not notice that the PCS states that it is an effective sacramental sign.

The Orthodox commentators were positive about the PCS's emphasis on episcopal ministry and on how apostolic succession is signified by continuity in the ordination of bishops. But they were critical about the recognition of bishops who were presbyterally ordained.¹⁸⁹ The method of the PCS was recognised as following that of BEM,¹⁹⁰ and was described as an agreement on the "nature of apostolicity" in which "episcopal succession is both respected and at the same time not absolutized".¹⁹¹ Bouteneff stated:

For the Orthodox Church, to speak of apostolic succession is to speak of the historic episcopal succession. As with Porvoo, that historic succession is not seen as a guarantee in itself of fidelity, but the absence of the historic succession is the absence of an essential element of the being of the church. There

¹⁸⁶ Tsetsis, 'Leuenberg, Meissen Und Porvoo', p185; Tsetsis, 'Letter from Gr. Prot. Georges Tsetsis to the Ass. Gen. Secr. of the LWF Eugene L. Brand about the PCS'; Bouteneff, 'The Porvoo Common Statement', p239.

¹⁸⁷ Tudorie, 'Porvoo Common Statement from an Orthodox Perspective', p70.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p71; Tudorie, 'Theological Dialogue', p135; Tudorie, 'The Porvoo Common Statement from an Orthodox Perspective', p295ff.

¹⁸⁹ Tsetsis, 'Leuenberg, Meissen Und Porvoo', p188; Bouteneff, 'The Porvoo Common Statement', p241ff.

¹⁹⁰ Bouteneff, 'The Porvoo Common Statement', p240. Bouteneff describes the method of the BEM as: "The so-called Lima document tends to treat substantial matters of disagreements by (a) defusing absolute interpretations, (b) validating both viewpoints, and (c) encouraging each to try to recognize the validity of the other view. This useful tactic has been widely influential in bilateral church relations in general, and in many specific church agreements. Logically, it is the only conceivable way forward other than the assimilation of one church's views into another or the 'repentance' of one church and subsequent change of practice."

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p244.

can be historic succession without apostolic fidelity, but there can be no full apostolic fidelity without the historic episcopal succession.¹⁹²

Bouteneff agreed with the theory in the PCS that succession is carried by more than one means, but he disagreed that other means can compensate if episcopal succession is lacking, because episcopacy is a necessary, although not a sufficient, sign.

¹⁹² Ibid., p242f.

7. The Porvoo theologians

The purpose of this chapter is to investigate the contributions of theologians from the Porvoo churches to the international Porvoo debate. Of particular interest, for the overall aim of my investigation, are interpretations of the PCS by the Porvoo delegates. As delegates, they are witnesses to the process and intention that led to the final formulation of the Porvoo text. Apart from the Porvoo delegates, other theologians from the Porvoo churches also participated in the international discussion. Below I identify all of them collectively as ‘the Porvoo theologians’. The theologians investigated are from England, Estonia, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and Norway. There are reasons to treat these theologians last in my analysis of the Porvoo debate. The material investigated in this chapter was not written as part of the Porvoo debates in the churches, but rather was intended to present the content of the PCS to an international audience and to explain and defend the PCS in the face of critical questions. In contrast to the general and heteronomous debate about the PCS, the interpretations of the various Porvoo theologians, to a large extent, showed consistency. Differences among the theologians here treated were variations of emphasis rather than real differences. An exception is the official view of the CoN, which was presented to an international audience by the Norwegian theologian Olav Fykse Tveit.

I will treat the content of the contributions thematically under the following headings: 1. The method of the PCS. 2. The PCS and the Leuenberg Agreement. 3. Visible unity. 4. The Church. 5. Apostolicity. 6. Episcopal succession and ordination.

7.1. The method of the PCS

A majority of the Porvoo theologians reflected in one way or the other on the method adopted in the PCS. ‘Method’ here relates to the ecumenical method and to the preconditions for how the churches engaged in the PCS can be united in visible unity. Themes treated in relation to the method in the PCS were: 1. The background and basis for the PCS. 2. The PCS as an intention to embrace traditional Anglican and Lutheran standpoints. 3. The PCS as conversion and as a growing together. 4. The PCS as consensus and reconciled diversity. Together they describe how the Porvoo theologians understood the method used in the PCS.

7.1.1. The background and basis of the PCS

According to Tjørhom, the international Anglican-Lutheran dialogue proves that the churches of the Anglican and Lutheran Communion are converging entities. They have, however, been divided by understandings of apostolic succession.¹ The Porvoo theologians emphasised the importance of BEM, and that the PCS can be seen as an implementation of the doctrinal convergence in BEM in a particular context – i.e., the national churches of Northern Europe.² BEM suggested that these considerations enable “churches which have not retained the episcopate to appreciate the episcopal succession as a sign though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church”.³ Tjørhom stated that, even if the formula *sign though not a guarantee* “enabled non-episcopal churches to relate to episcopal succession, this formula did not say much – or anything – about how concrete communion could be achieved”.⁴ The issue was elaborated in the international Anglican-Lutheran dialogue, and in the PCS it was put in concrete terms with the aim of transforming the churches into visible unity.⁵ Tjørhom expressed it as the PCS having three aims: (a) the PCS is a commitment to the conversion of achieved doctrinal agreement into concrete communion; (b) an awareness that this would require some kind of solution to the problems connected with episcopal succession; and (c) an attempt to locate an approach that could be applied to Lutheran churches with and without episcopal succession.⁶

Another factor in the background of the PCS was emphasised by, inter alia, the Anglican ecumenical officer Mary Tanner. She underlined the context of a changed Europe as a crucial motivation for the vision of the PCS: “the challenge to engage in God’s mission to the people of our nations in a changing Northern Europe, and to support one another, across the line of the old Eastern and Western Europe”.⁷ This background and vocation is summarised in the title *Together in Mission and Ministry*.⁸

¹ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p168ff; For a review of the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue documents in ecclesiological perspective see Repo, ‘Episcopal Ministry and the Diversity of Charisms’.

² E.g. Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p172f; Tjørhom, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement - An Introduction and Evaluation’, p8f; Fykse Tveit, ‘Ecumenical Attitudes as Criteria for Ecumenical Relations’; Hind, ‘Sign but Not Guarantee’, p152ff; Busch Nielsen, ‘Apostolicity and Succession in the PCS’, p186f.

³ BEM, M§38.

⁴ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p170; Cf. Hind, ‘Sign but Not Guarantee’, p151ff.

⁵ E.g. Tustin, ‘The Impact of the Porvoo Agreement’, p164; Furberg, ‘The Sending and Mission of the Church’, p203; Grönvik, ‘Lutherish-Anglikanische Gemeinschaft’, p364f; Sannes, ‘Karakteristikk og vurdering av “Porvoo-erklæringen”’, p84; Podmore, ‘Current Streams in Ecumenism’, p17ff.

⁶ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p171f.

⁷ Tanner, ‘Mission: Strategies and Prospects’, April 1998, p23; Cf. Podmore, ‘Porvoo: Text, Follow-up and Implications’, p2.

⁸ Cf. Tustin, ‘The Meaning of the Porvoo Agreement for the Anglican Churches’, p1f.

7.1.2. The PCS beyond Anglican and Lutheran standpoints

Bishop John Hind claimed that the method in the PCS is an expression of a new ecumenical method that developed in the last part of the 20th century.⁹ This method strives to go beyond what are currently seen as the points of disagreement to discover whether they may be contradictory ways of expressing a common truth. This is what the PCS tries to do with regard to episcopal succession, without glossing over the differences.¹⁰ The intention was well summarised by Bishop Furberg, who at the first meeting in Sigtuna 1989 expressed the hope for the dialogue, “that our churches’ mutual relations should be able to move forward to the same level, without anyone needing to take a backward step”.¹¹ The intention and method in the PCS was expressed in many ways by the Porvoo theologians.

Bishop Stephen Sykes stated that the scriptural portrait of the Church in the PCS is an expression of this method. The traditional way for both Lutherans and Anglicans has been to define in advance the essence of the Church, and then to determine whether another church is ‘true church’ or not.¹² This approach, according to Sykes, was a failure. In contrast, the PCS does not define the ‘essence of Christianity’ or the ‘fundamentals’ of the Church, neither does it make a distinction between ‘essentials and adiaphora’. Instead the PCS gives the scriptural portrait, which is based on *communio* ecclesiology, and embraces the divisive questions about ecclesiology and succession. Not just episcopal succession, but also doctrinal fundamentals are relativised and embraced through an ecclesiology such as the scriptural portrait in the PCS.¹³

Tjørhom describes the PCS as seeking an intermediate position that is thoroughgoing in the PCS’s understanding of ecclesiology, apostolicity, and succession:

On the one hand, we have those who, at least in practice, falsely identify apostolicity with only one of its signs – most often with the sign of the historic episcopal succession. On the other hand, there are those who are prepared to settle with a purely abstract approach to apostolicity – bluntly disregarding all feasible signs. Both positions come through as clearly lacking – *inter alia* in the sense that neither of them manages to realize that apostolicity must be seen as a comprehensive ecclesiological category anchored in the life of the church as a whole. In my opinion, one of the most important achievements of the PCS is its constructive efforts to identify an intermediate position be-

⁹ Hind, ‘Sign but Not Guarantee’, p152f; Hind, ‘Some Anglican Reflections’, p51.

¹⁰ Hind, ‘Sign but Not Guarantee’, p152f; Hind, ‘Some Anglican Reflections’, p51.

¹¹ Tustin, ‘The Background and Genesis of the PCS’, p5.

¹² For a recent formulation of this view, see; Nørgaard-Højen, *Økumenisk Teologi*, p176f.

¹³ Sykes, ‘The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS’, p92ff; Sykes, ‘Episkopé and Episcopacy’, p101; See also Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p121f.

tween the two mentioned extremes. And in developing such an intermediate position, a broad and dynamic ecclesiological approach is applied.¹⁴

Equally, Bishop Hind emphasised that the PCS should not be understood as the triumph of a protestant or a catholic conception of apostolicity but as a “mutual rereading of history and the succession. *Porvoo* is thus a good example of ecumenical method – getting behind the language of concepts of confessional confrontation in order to reappropriate our history together”.¹⁵ The Anglican ecumenical officer Colin Podmore commented that “the great thing about *Porvoo* is that we have all discovered together a new position not identical with that which any of us held before”.¹⁶

Another expression of the PCS’s method is the conscious strategy to avoid polarisation and controversial concepts burdened by history. Bishop Tustin explained that:

[The conversations] refrained from describing ordained ministries as ‘valid’ or ‘invalid.’ We did not lay down preconditions, or speak in terms of what was ‘necessary’ or ‘essential.’ We held back from using the expressions ‘full communion’ owing to difficulties of translation and widely felt misgivings about this terminology, and instead offered our own redefinition of what such a relationship would mean.¹⁷ In place of the ambiguous term ‘apostolic succession’ we carefully differentiated between ‘the apostolicity of the church,’ ‘the apostolic ministry’ and ‘historic episcopal succession’.¹⁸

Equally, Tjørhom emphasised the intermediate position, or combination, of both an ontological and a functional perspective, which is focused less on the question of validity of previous ministerial structures, and more on the future and “finding solutions that will be acceptable” to all the participating churches.¹⁹ Tanner stated that the strength of the PCS is that it, unlike much Anglican and ecumenical discussion in the past, treats apostolicity in a holistic way – i.e., in the perspective of the whole people of God.²⁰ Tjørhom noted that since Lutheran theology has not traditionally given much attention to ecclesiology, the ecclesiological basis of the PCS is a challenge for the Nordic-Baltic churches.²¹

¹⁴ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p167f; Cf. Tjørhom, ‘Better Together’, p6; Tjørhom, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement - An Introduction and Evaluation’, p16.

¹⁵ Hind, ‘The PCS: Process and Contents’, p152.

¹⁶ Podmore, ‘Porvoo: Text, Follow-up and Implications’, p5.

¹⁷ Tustin refers to PCS §28.

¹⁸ Tustin, ‘The Impact of the Porvoo Agreement’, p10.

¹⁹ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p172; The forward looking approach of the PCS is also noted by Busch Nielsen, ‘Apostolicity and Succession in the PCS’, p186.

²⁰ Tanner, ‘The Anglican Position on Apostolic Continuity’, p119.

²¹ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolic Continuity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p134f; Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p201f.

7.1.3. Consensus, convergence or reconciled diversity?

It has been asked what kind of document the PCS really is.²² Tjørhom claimed that the PCS should not be understood as an “ecumenism of consensus”, which he defined as an “abstract or theoretical doctrinal agreement that is not being converted into concrete fellowship”.²³ At the same time he stated that “the whole Porvoo process aimed at converting consensus into fellowship”.²⁴ The Archbishop of Turku, John Vikström, stressed the important role that consensus plays in the PCS, but also that, as the PCS indicates, “there will still remain – in the churches of both traditions – the kind of diversity which these churches must seek to overcome in the future”.²⁵ Vikström stated that:

The PCS makes use of a kind of ‘*combined method*’, which seeks to take seriously both doctrinal consensus and reconciled diversity. Thus, the doctrinal consensus concerned is expressed in quite a full form – instead of first, briefly, introducing a kind of ‘basis’ or ‘expression’. In this sense, the PCS differs from the method used in the Leuenberg Concordat.²⁶ ... The structure and the content of the PCS reveal what kinds of things are considered as prerequisites for and elements of the emergence of closer unity. These are 1) A common understanding of the nature and unity of the Church (chapter II), 2) agreement concerning the content of faith (chapter III), and 3) a consensus concerning historical episcopacy and episcopal succession as a servant of the apostolicity of the Church and as a sign of the unity and continuity of the Church (chapter IV).²⁷

The description of the method of the PCS reveals a tension between the notions of *consensus* and *convergence*. Several of the Porvoo theologians bore witness to such a tension.²⁸ The Anglican church historian John Halliburton emphasised that it is clear that the ELCD has “an essentially traditional structure of episcopal ministry” despite “differences in the understanding of the theological significance of that ministry”.²⁹

7.1.4. PCS as transformation and as a growing together

Bishop Sykes described the relation between conversion and ecumenical agreements. He argued that, of necessity, there would be a gap between “the

²² E.g. Meyer, ‘Some Observations Concerning the Unity Concept of the PCS’.

²³ Tjørhom, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement - An Introduction and Evaluation’, p8.

²⁴ Ibid., p9.

²⁵ Vikström, ‘The PCS from the Lutheran Point of View’, p5; This was also noted in the Norwegian Porvoo process, see Fykse Tveit, ‘Den offisielle handsaminga av Porvoo-dokumentet’, p135, 143.

²⁶ Vikström, ‘The PCS from the Lutheran Point of View’, p4; Also published in; Vikström, ‘The PCS from the Lutheran Point of View’.

²⁷ Vikström, ‘The PCS from the Lutheran Point of View’, p5.

²⁸ E.g. Hietamäki, *Agreeable Agreement*, p179.

²⁹ Halliburton, ‘Bishops Together in Mission and Ministry’, p260.

theological content of a doctrine in an ecumenical document and of the same doctrine developed and justified within a particular theological or ecclesial tradition”.³⁰ Without such a gap there would be no need for ecumenical statements, and simultaneously the churches involved in ecumenism “must consider at least the possibility of extending or enriching one ecclesial tradition; and the achievement of an ecumenical text requires of the interpreter a genuine effort of revision of his or her traditional standpoint”.³¹

With reference to PCS §22, which states that “all existing denominational traditions are provisional”, Archbishop Vikström described the PCS, without using the word, as a transformation.³² The Bishop of Helsinki, Eero Huovinen, emphasised that the method was spiritual, and that unity is understood as given in Christ (PCS §21). According to Huovinen the ‘core’ of the PCS is its third chapter, *What We Agree in Faith*, and that it wishes to link prayer and doctrine.³³ The Finnish theologian Juhani Forsberg emphasised that the PCS means “a readiness to consider changes in the constitution and spiritual life of the signatory churches”.³⁴

Bishop Hind pictured the PCS as a dynamic agreement, and said that many critics of the PD did not understand the dynamic and provisional nature of the agreement. The PD does not imply only mutual recognition of the participating churches, but also a vision for the future. The PD consists thus of both recognitions and commitments in view of the future, which the PCS understands sacramentally and eschatologically. Hind stated that we shall not only ask “‘What is necessary for eucharistic communion?’, but also ‘What follows from eucharistic communion?’”.³⁵

7.2. The PCS and the Leuenberg Agreement

The relation between the PCS and the Leuenberg Agreement was raised by several Porvoo theologians.³⁶ As we have seen, Archbishop Vikström emphasised that the PCS followed a different method from that in the Leuenberg Agreement. In a background paper in 2008, the Executive Secretary for

³⁰ Sykes, ‘The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS’, p89ff.

³¹ Ibid., p89. The motif of conversion or transformation and practical implementation was also stated by Tjørhom, Tanner, Bishop Hill, and Bishop Tustin. Eg. Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p171f; Tanner, ‘The Anglican Position on Apostolic Continuity’, p119; Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p127; Hill, ‘A Response to the Revd Dr T G Hardt’, p14; Tustin, ‘The Meaning of the Porvoo Agreement for the Anglican Churches’. About the implementation in the PCS see further in Chapter 16.

³² Vikström, ‘The PCS from the Lutheran Point of View’, p25.

³³ Huovinen, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p157.

³⁴ Forsberg, ‘The Reception and Implementation’, p59.

³⁵ Hind, ‘Anmerkungen zu “Porvoo”’, p28.

³⁶ For a treatment of the relation between Meissen and the PCS, see; Reardon, ‘L’Intercommunion et les Accords de Meissen et de Porvoo’; Also published in English; Reardon, ‘Intercommunion and the Meissen and Porvoo Agreements’.

Theology at the *Department for International Relations* in the ELCF, Tomi Karttunen, elaborated on how the ELCF understands this methodological difference.³⁷ He noted that some 20 years of ecumenical development stand between the two agreements. Leuenberg represents, inter alia, an ecclesiological approach that is “based on the idea of ‘minimal consensus’ and remain thus rather open to various interpretations”. Unity in Leuenberg is grounded on “the distinction between ‘Basis’ (Grund) and ‘Shape’ (Gestalt)”.³⁸ In contrast, Karttunen stated that the PD is based on a common theological doctrinal understanding, not on a non-objectifiable experience of faith, and the Porvoo Communion is built on a common ecclesiology and on the sacramental essence of the Church, not – as in Leuenberg – on experience, service, and witness.³⁹ According to Karttunen, the real difference between the two agreements is that ecumenism is more than just co-operation between churches. It includes both ‘fellowship’ and ‘unity’. In contrast, the PCS does not see visible unity as a separate aim, distinguished from church fellowship. Unity, according to the ELCF, is not only a question of witness and service, but also of making visible the oneness that is a gift in Christ.⁴⁰ Bishop Huovinen emphasised that the PCS avoids “the unfortunate interpretation connected with the Reformation, and in particular with post-Enlightenment development, whereby the emphasis laid on the Word of God is seen as a contrast over against sacramental life”.⁴¹

The characterising of Leuenberg as a minimal consensus was also used by Ragnar Persenius, Director for the CoS’s *Theology and Ecumenical Affairs*, later bishop. He asked: “Why settle for a minimum unity when unity can always be deepened?”⁴² He also recalled that the CA was written in the undivided church, while the CA 7 today has to be interpreted in “the context of a divided Christianity. This difference in context is vitally important. If the overall goal is visible unity then that which is necessary has to manifest itself, it] has to be made visible. From the fact that from a theological point of view different manifestations are possible, it does not follow that any outward manifestation of the Church is of equal value, or of equal irrelevance.”⁴³

³⁷ The first response of the ELCF was formulated by the Finnish professor Tuomo Mannermaa in Finnish in 1978 and in German in 1981: *Von Preussen nach Leuenberg. Hintergrund und Entwicklung der theologischen Methode der Leuenberger Konkordie* (Hamburg: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1981). Saarinen is critical of Mannermaa’s approach, saying that he has overemphasised the idealistic origin of Leuenberg. According to Saarinen, there is a stronger link between Leuenberg and the theology of *koinonia* and of the ecumenical movement than Mannermaa believes. See further: Saarinen, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement and the Leuenberg Concord’, p259, 266.

³⁸ Karttunen, ‘Useful and Possible?’, p4, 19.

³⁹ Ibid., p13.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p18.

⁴¹ Huovinen, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p159.

⁴² Persenius, ‘Critical Questions from a Nordic Perspective’, p103.

⁴³ Ibid., p102; See also; Hill, ‘Leuenberg-Meissen-Porvoo’, p113.

At an LWF gathering on Lutheran identity, the head of CoN's *Council for International Relations*, later General Secretary of the WCC, Olav Fykse Tveit, presented CoN's approach to the compatibility of different ecumenical agreements. The background was that the CoN approved both the PD (in 1996) and the Leuenberg Agreement (in 1999).⁴⁴ Based on a minimalist interpretation of CA 7, the CoN took the view that, although the function of *episcopé* is necessary for each church, its structure and understanding can vary. Fykse Tveit summarised the CoN's ecumenical approach in these terms:

(1) The CoN – and other churches sharing the apostolic tradition in Word and Sacraments – are apostolic churches prior to the joint consecrations of bishops (with Anglicans). (2) The episcopal succession is accepted as a sign of continuity and unity of the apostolic Church. By intention and by practice it existed in our church before the signing of the Porvoo agreement. It should be practiced in a more comprehensive, ecumenically significant and theological reflected way. (3) Whether a pastor was legitimately ordained before Anglican bishops participated in the ordination of bishops, is regarded as a question that is not relevant to the legitimacy of the pastor. (4) The Agreements with Methodist and Reformed churches do confirm that having episcopal succession in classical Anglican meaning is no condition for church fellowship. The basis for 'church fellowship' is understood according to CA 7 as agreement in the use and understanding of the Gospel and the sacraments. The Porvoo agreement shows that the CoN accepts that episcopal succession is an important sign, but not a condition for church fellowship.⁴⁵

In contrast to Fykse Tveit, Bishop Sykes, in a speech given at the General Assembly for the Leuenberg Agreement, described the PCS as a challenge to the principles of the Leuenberg Agreement. He emphasised that Anglicans welcome the Leuenberg method of declaring what it is that binds the churches together. The crucial question in the Anglican-Leuenberg relations is the understanding of *satis est* in CA 7. Sykes stated that:

It should be said that Anglicans would have no intention of insisting on a more restrictive understanding of the episcopate than, for example, the authors of the Augsburg Confession themselves. Would I be right in understanding that the implication of Article XXVIII in relation to Article VII is that an episcopate serving the unity of the Church founded upon the gospel could not be considered an imposition upon the Church? Would it be correct to say that the Lutherans at Augsburg did not demand that Catholics abandon

⁴⁴ For a brief background description of the different relations of the Nordic churches to Leuenberg, see Saarinen, 'The Porvoo Common Statement and the Leuenberg Concord', p258ff. Of the Porvoo churches the EELC has also been a member of the Leuenberg Fellowship since 1982. See Pädam, 'The Reception and Implementation of the PCS in Estonia', p67.

⁴⁵ This is not an exact quotation, but linguistically edited, taken from Fykse Tveit, 'Who Defines Who We Are?', p239. For an analysis of Fykse Tveit's statement see Chapter 13.5.

either in word or in deed episcopal authority as a condition of communion, if such jurisdiction were compatible with the Gospel?⁴⁶

Sykes stated that the modern Anglican understanding of episcopacy is consistent with the understanding of episcopacy in CA 28, which challenges the churches of Leuenberg with regard to episcopacy and Anglicanism.

7.3. Visible unity

When the Porvoo theologians discussed the Church's visibility and unity, several questions were raised. One is related to the question about method and the relation of the concept of *visible unity* to different unity concepts used in the ecumenical movement. Tanner stated that "in describing a portrait of unity, [the PCS] deliberately avoids using any of the terms that have been used in the past – 'full communion', 'organic union' or 'reconciled diversity'."⁴⁷

It thus avoids the accusation that organic union overemphasizes the structural, or that reconciled diversity seems to justify continuing separation. It also avoids the accusation that Anglicans seem in the past to have defined full communion in a number of different ways.⁴⁸

Tjørhom stated that, through the use of the concept of *visible unity*, the PCS has recognised that unity must be visible and that "even if church fellowship is processual to the extent that it must be realised through steps and stages, it does not make much sense to speak of 'half-full' (or 'half-empty') communion".⁴⁹ Linked to this non-minimalist understanding is the PCS's emphasis on the transformation or conversion of the churches from what they had in common to a visible church communion, which aims, in Tanner's words, for "a unity and communion beyond what we presently know as Anglicanism, beyond what we presently know as Lutheranism".⁵⁰

Another issue discussed was the relation between the apostolicity of the Church and its visibility. The Porvoo theologians took the view that the relation between the apostolicity of the Church and its missionary sending into the world, means that apostolicity is a mark of the Church that is essentially visible.⁵¹ Tanner noted that the PCS refers repeatedly to the biblical portrait

⁴⁶ Sykes, 'The CoE and the Leuenberg', p4.

⁴⁷ Tanner, 'The Porvoo Agreement', p145; Tanner, 'The Concept of Unity in the PCS', p122; Vikström, 'The PCS from the Lutheran Point of View', p5.

⁴⁸ Tanner, 'The Concept of Unity in the PCS', p123.

⁴⁹ Tjørhom, 'The Porvoo Common Statement - An Introduction and Evaluation', p11.

⁵⁰ Tanner, 'The Concept of Unity in the PCS', p127. Cf. Chapter 7.1.2.

⁵¹ This understanding of the visibility of the Church has consequences for the implementation of the PCS and the practical and structural consequences of the Porvoo churches' approval of the PD. See further Chapter 16.

of visible unity, as exemplified in section 28 of the PCS, which states that “the different elements, or aspects, of visible communion – the faith, the sacraments, the ministry, and the forms of collegial and conciliar consultation – are interrelated aspects”.⁵² Tanner emphasised that the scriptural portrait of the Church in the second chapter of the PCS should not be separated from the parts of the statement that follow it. The visible unity sketched in the portrait is concrete and manifested in common faith, in a common sacramental life, and in a single “ministry, ordered in the threefold pattern of bishop, priest, and deacon with a shared understanding of the relation of the priesthood of the ordained to the priesthood of Christ and to the priesthood of the church (§32)”.⁵³ A further concrete expression of the visible unity and of the relational understanding of *communio* is the PCS’s description of the threefold dimension of *episcopé*; that episcopacy in Porvoo is exercised personally, collegially, and communally – i.e., in relation to the bishop’s diocese, to other bishops, and to the community in synodical gatherings.⁵⁴ On the basis of its *communio* ecclesiology, the PCS emphasises both the visible nature of the Church and its diversity.⁵⁵ This diversity is about the plurality of expressions in the Church that at the same time serve the unity. In the PCS, not just unity, but diversity too, in its non-separating sense, is given by God.⁵⁶ However, as Tanner emphasised, this does not mean that Lutheran and Anglican identities are supposed to remain parallel in the communion.⁵⁷ Unity in the PCS is simultaneously understood as given by God and as a human task.⁵⁸

One subject not discussed by the Porvoo theologians was the question of a universal primacy. Podmore did underline, however, that even though the PCS does not focus on universal primacy – since the obstacle to unity that the churches concerned had to resolve was a different one – it is nevertheless a part of the PCS. He stated that the PCS clearly speaks about a universal primacy when it describes how the personal dimension of oversight finds expression at the universal level of the Church’s life.⁵⁹

⁵² Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p122.

⁵³ Ibid., p124.

⁵⁴ Tanner, ‘The Anglican Position on Apostolic Continuity’, p121; see also; Tanner, ‘The Effect of BEM on the CoE’, p217; See also; Vikström, ‘The PCS from the Lutheran Point of View’, p5ff; Furberg, ‘The Sending and Mission of the Church’, p202ff, 214f.

⁵⁵ The question of the visibility and unity of the church is further elaborated in; Tjørhom, ‘A Question of Balance’, p192ff; Sykes, ‘The CoE and the Leuenberg’, p5; Tjørhom, ‘The Goal of Unity’, p83ff. Tjørhom relates this discussion to *Facing Unity* §3, which links the church’s unity and visibility. Considering that some Lutheran critics said that the talk about visible unity was non-Lutheran, it is notable that this comes from an LWF dialogue.

⁵⁶ This was also noted by; Vikström, ‘The PCS from the Lutheran Point of View’, p4.

⁵⁷ Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p127.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p122.

⁵⁹ Podmore, ‘Porvoo: Text, Follow-up and Implications’, p6.

7.4. The Church

The PCS understands episcopal succession ecclesologically and in the perspective of the apostolicity of the Church as a whole. As we have seen, Tjørhom described the Porvoo solution as an intermediate position and as an overcoming of an interpretation of the Church as, on the one hand, a purely ontological-static institution and, on the other hand, as purely functional. Instead, the PCS describes what Tjørhom calls an instrumental or sacramental ecclesiology. Tjørhom argued that the Church in the PCS is understood as a *Sacramentum mundi*, a concept not mentioned as such in the PCS. The Church is seen as an instrument “in God’s plan to reunite humankind and restore the creation”, and is seen in the context of this mission as God’s instrument.⁶⁰ The Church’s instrumentality is founded on the Church’s mission and on God’s sending of the Church into the world, which is another way of describing its apostolicity – i.e., the Church is sent.

Bishop Matti Repo has demonstrated how *Lumen Gentium* influenced BEM, which in turn, influenced the Anglican-Lutheran dialogues – including the PCS. The ecclesiology of *Lumen Gentium*, which combines the christological and the pneumatological dimensions by pointing to the various charisms granted by the Spirit to the Church as whole, is also obvious in the PCS, according to Repo. Further, the description of the Church as a sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom of God originates from *Lumen Gentium*.⁶¹ Tjørhom emphasised the relation between this instrumentality of the Church and the Church’s *communio*:

This instrumental-sacramental ecclesiology is based on a perception of the church as a vertically founded and horizontally directed *communio* or *koinonia*. At the core of this communion is our concrete sacramental participation in Christ and the fruits of his offering. In baptism we are united and integrated in Christ’s death and resurrection; in the eucharist we eat his flesh and drink his blood, thus becoming his body in the most real sense. Against this background it can be argued that Porvoo’s version of the *communio*-ecclesiology is essentially Christologically focused and anchored. But this is developed in a Trinitarian way: our communion with the Father our Creator is restored by our participation in and with Christ through the Holy Spirit. On the basis of our *koinonia* with Christ, we also have a communion with each other and share in a common life. Thus the church’s manifestation as a social-horizontal *communio* is firmly grounded in its nature as the body of Christ.⁶²

⁶⁰ Tjørhom, ‘The Porvoo Statement: A Possible Ecumenical Breakthrough?’, p305ff; Also in Norwegian in: Tjørhom, ‘Porvoo-rapporten – et muligt økumeniskt gjennombrud?’, p178ff; Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p197f.

⁶¹ Repo, ‘Episcopal Ministry and the Diversity of Charisms’, p88, 92f.

⁶² Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p199; See also; Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p122; Another theologian who emphasises the importance of the notion of *koinonia* for the Porvoo ecclesiology is; Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, the whole book but particularly p295-308.

Church is pictured in the PCS both as a “divine reality” and “a human institution”, and characterised through “a portrait of a church living in the light of the Gospel”, emphasising the apostolic “faith in word and in life” and “everywhere and at all times” (PCS §20).⁶³

As described, Bishop Sykes emphasised the importance of the *scriptural portrait* in the PCS, which he described as an innovation of the PCS. Sykes maintained that the scriptural portrait is a consequence of the *communio* ecclesiology of the PCS.⁶⁴ Not just episcopal succession, but also doctrinal fundamentals are relativised and embraced through an ecclesiology such as the scriptural portrait. Sykes stated that the PCS understands the Church in a missionary perspective, with profound implications for how apostolicity and its marks are understood. Through this ecclesiological missionary perspective, not only ordained ministry but also “the church and the gospel are thus necessarily related to each other”.⁶⁵ Instead of the fundamentals of the Church,⁶⁶ Sykes states that the scriptural portrait is related to sign-theory and to the bonds of communion (PCS §20, 24), which are understood in the context of the Church as a whole. It is the understanding of the apostolicity of the Church as a whole that is deepened with consequences for how both episcopal succession and the Church’s life, faith, and witness are understood as expressions of the Church’s apostolicity.⁶⁷ The absolute security of the defined fundamentals is replaced by an ecclesiology that understands the Church to be the people of God, a *communio*, “rooted and grounded in the love and grace of the Lord Christ’ (§20)”.⁶⁸

7.5. Apostolicity

Tjørhom stated that since apostolicity is a fundamental mark of the Church, it is a necessary requirement of the Church, “which implies that there can be no Church without some kind of apostolic continuity”.⁶⁹ According to Tjørhom, the PCS explains apostolicity christologically, as a link to Christ as the cornerstone of the Church, and not only as a link back to the early Church. To be apostolic means to be sent, and therefore apostolicity is un-

⁶³ Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p198.

⁶⁴ Sykes, ‘The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS’, p92ff; See also Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p121f.

⁶⁵ Sykes quotes PCS §17; Sykes, ‘The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS’, p92.

⁶⁶ I will discuss this issue further in Chapter 10.

⁶⁷ Sykes, ‘The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS’, p95ff.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p95.

⁶⁹ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolic Continuity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p127ff. Tjørhom discusses some basic presuppositions for the apostolicity of the church in the introduction to this article. The introduction does not specifically discuss the PCS, but the article as whole focuses on apostolicity in the PCS, and the introduction is the basis for the understanding of apostolicity in the PCS. It is therefore relevant to treat it as part of how Tjørhom understands the Porvoo perspective of apostolicity, continuity, and succession.

derstood in the PCS as linked to the missionary perspective of its ecclesiology and the *missio Dei*, aimed at the restoration of the world. Its apostolicity helps the Church to remember that it does not exist for itself, but for the salvation of the world.⁷⁰ Tjørhom stated that, in order to retain apostolicity as a living entity, as an essential mark of the Church, apostolic continuity needs “concrete, visible expressions and signs which can serve as constant reminders of this ecclesial mark”.⁷¹ Since it is the Church in its totality that is apostolic, apostolicity cannot be limited to some sectors of the Church, and as such it must be carried by the whole people of God, who together confesses the faith of the Church expressed in its teaching. At the same time, ordained ministry has “a special responsibility for expressing and safeguarding” the Church’s apostolicity.⁷²

Close to Tjørhom’s view, Tanner emphasised the relational and missionary character of apostolicity in the PCS. It is relational since the Church as *communio* participates in the relations of the Trinity, and lives in relation to the Apostles and “it lives an intricate network of social relations. The apostolic character is also dynamic. Founded on the Apostles who Jesus taught and sent, it is sent in mission through time, looking beyond history to eternity, to the eschaton. It experiences in its midst here and now, both the memory of the past and the foretaste of the future.”⁷³ Tanner said that the Church, understood as an apostolic *communio* with a mission into the world, is not an abstract theory but a visible community of persons living relationally and in continuity with its origin and its future. In this apostolic *communio* ordained ministry has its place and is understood relationally.⁷⁴

The Danish theologian Kirsten Bush Nielsen found ambiguities in the PCS about the relation between apostolicity and succession, which she argued was not clearly stated.⁷⁵ At the same time she maintained that, since the aim of the PCS is communion between Anglican and Lutheran churches, those questions are not the focus of attention. For the future development of Porvoo, she stated that it is necessary to clarify this relation in order to “conduct a thoroughgoing analysis of the question of the theology of ministry, especially the issues of episcopal succession and the theology of sign in the PCS”.⁷⁶ Finnish theologian Minna Hietamäki agreed, saying that the weakest part of the PCS is its attempt to move from the apostolicity of the whole Church to the specific sign of episcopacy. At the same time, she stated that the PCS makes “a substantial contribution in developing a ‘theology of sign’

⁷⁰ Ibid., p128. This was also emphasised by Furberg, ‘The Sending and Mission of the Church’, p201ff.

⁷¹ Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p200.

⁷² Ibid., p199.

⁷³ With reference to PCS §37; Tanner, ‘The Anglican Position on Apostolic Continuity’, p120.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p121.

⁷⁵ Busch Nielsen, ‘Apostolicity and Succession in the PCS’, p192f.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p193, note 8.

to describe the episcopacy's significance",⁷⁷ and that 'sign' in the PCS refers not only to episcopacy but also to the Church as such, to episcopal succession, as well as to episcopal ordination with the laying on of hands.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, Hietamäki concluded, given the claim that the PCS did not intend to judge the canonical validity of ordinations, there seems to be a tension in the PCS in relation to the emphasis on episcopal ordination as an effective sign. This tension, she says, is that despite the PCS's "best efforts, the nature of an efficacious sign, which does not guarantee the presence of what it signifies, remains unclear".⁷⁹

7.6. Episcopal succession and ordination

On episcopal succession, Tjørhom emphasised the intermediate position of the PCS:

Porvoo aims at locating an intermediate position between two extremes at this point: On the one hand, those who identify apostolicity with only one of its signs, namely the historic episcopate – and on the other hand, those who tend to disregard all concrete signs of apostolic continuity and thus often end up with a rather abstract comprehension of this essential *nota ecclesiae*.⁸⁰

Tjørhom argued that to retain apostolicity as a living entity in the Church, apostolic continuity needs "concrete, visible expressions and signs which can serve as constant reminders of this ecclesial mark".⁸¹ In the life of the Church there are many different apostolic signs, of which ordained ministry is one; but it is entrusted with a special responsibility for interpreting and safeguarding the Church's apostolic nature:

This responsibility applies particularly to the office of the bishop or *episcopé*, which is a special sign of unity and continuity in the life of the church. Normally, episcopal continuity is expressed in the ordination of bishops through prayer and the laying-on of hands by fellow bishops. But it can also be manifested in other ways, for example through a continuity in episcopal sees. ... Apostolicity shall not be exclusively identified with its signs – and especially not with only one of these signs. Thus a basic apostolicity can be maintained in periods when some of its signs have been lost. On the other hand, *signum* and *res* – the sign and the matter itself – should not be completely torn apart. And no church can afford to neglect a single potential sign of the apostolic continuity which is essential to the church.⁸²

⁷⁷ Hietamäki, *Agreeable Agreement*, p161.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p162.

⁸⁰ Tjørhom, 'Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS', p172; Tjørhom, 'The Church and Its Apostolicity', p199.

⁸¹ Tjørhom, 'The Church and Its Apostolicity', p200.

⁸² Ibid.

As a mediatory solution, Tjørhom described episcopal succession in the PCS as neither “an absolute requirement nor a mere ‘optional extra’ in the church’s life”.⁸³ However, since no church can afford to neglect a single sign of the apostolic continuity, since apostolicity is essential to the Church, all churches have to strive to be as apostolic as possible. Tjørhom emphasised this matter as being very important for the understanding of mutuality in the PCS, since the sharing of gifts does not work in one direction only: “all the churches have vital gifts to bring in this connection”.⁸⁴ According to Tjørhom, the PCS is an invitation to the churches to share their different signs of apostolicity with each other within the framework of a living communion. The PCS further “presupposes that apostolicity is expressed better and more fully in communion – advocating a ‘Catholic’ approach to the apostolic nature of the *una sancta*”.⁸⁵

Tjørhom maintained that the Porvoo solution is possible because the PCS’s perspective is neither ontological nor purely functional, but instrumental and sacramental, which can bridge the earlier differences between the churches. The apostolicity of the whole Church, for the PCS, is focused in the ordained ministry, which has a particular responsibility to witness to the tradition and proclaim it with authority in every generation. The “oversight of the Church and its mission is the particular responsibility of the bishop” (PCS §43) who, in the PCS, has a special role in “the service of the apostolic succession”. This special role is further “signified in the ordination or consecration of a bishop” (PCS §47). Tjørhom explains:

The dialogue commission has two concerns which at first sight may appear to be in disagreement. On the one hand, we confirm that ‘the use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission’ (PCS 51; alluding to BEM’s description of historic succession as ‘a sign, though not a guarantee’). This is further developed when we characterize succession as ‘a sign of our intention, under God, to ensure the continuity of the Church in apostolic life and witness’ (PCS 32k) and when we state that ‘faithfulness to the apostolic calling of the whole Church is carried by more than one means of continuity’ (PCS 52). On the other hand, we do not regard this sign of apostolic continuity as a mere optional extra in the Church’s life especially since ‘the retention of the sign remains a permanent challenge to fidelity and to unity, a summons to witness to, and a commission to realize more fully, the permanent characteristics of the Church of the Apostles’ (PCS 51).⁸⁶

Likewise, Podmore stated that on the one hand, episcopal succession is said to be a sign, but not a guarantee; while on the other hand:

⁸³ Ibid., p200; Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p176.

⁸⁴ Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p200.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p200; Tjørhom, ‘Better Together’.

⁸⁶ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolic Continuity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p133.

[The PCS §48] tells us not just what this sign is but what it *does*. The paragraph tells us that ‘the sign is effective in four ways’. This is not the mere sign which some Lutherans might be tempted to see it as. It is an effective sign, which effects what it signifies. In the Church we have a word for signs which effect what they signify – we call them ‘sacraments’, and although the final version of the Porvoo text does not use the word as earlier drafts did, this is undoubtedly sacramental language.⁸⁷

The sacramental character of ordination in the PCS is also stressed by Hietamäki. She notes that some arguments in the PCS bear a resemblance to classic scholastic sacramental theology, describing ordination with help of the three concepts of *materia*, *forma*, and *intentio*,⁸⁸ as an effective sign. According to Hietamäki, the PCS conforms in its essentials with the requirements of the sacrament of orders in the RCC. She notes that, due to its sacramental character, the PCS necessarily implies that a church that does not use the effective sign remains in an irregular situation. This difficulty is overcome in the PCS through its emphasis on *intention*. Hietamäki notes that:

The substantial understanding of apostolicity and predicating apostolicity to various *signa* also allows Lutherans and Anglicans to recognize apostolicity where the factual succession of episcopal ministers has been discontinued. Even here, the main argument for asserting that apostolicity is not lost is the intention to stay in apostolic continuity and to manifest it with appropriate visible signs. This observation does not undermine the PCS’s ‘ecumenical breakthrough’ in describing the relations between apostolicity and episcopacy. It does make it harder to apply this theological breakthrough beyond Lutheran churches that already have bishops in either factual or intended succession.⁸⁹

Like Tjørhom, and in line with Podmore and later Hietamäki, Tanner states that episcopal succession in the PCS is not an *optional extra*, but neither is it a guarantee of a church’s fidelity.⁹⁰ She underlines the importance of intention in the PCS:

Continuity in the episcopate signifies God’s promise to the church and the church’s intention to be faithful to its apostolic calling. It gives assurance to the faithful that the church today intends to do and to be what the church has always intended to do and be. The laying on of hands by bishops in succession is a sign – an effective sign – of that intention. But continuity is also manifested in other ways: for example in the episcopal sees of the catholic church. The understanding of ‘bottoms on seats’ rather than hands on heads, is well-attested in the early church and in the Orthodox tradition. So apostolic

⁸⁷ Podmore, ‘Porvoo: Text, Follow-up and Implications’, p6.

⁸⁸ I will discuss these concepts in Chapter 14.2.2.

⁸⁹ Hietamäki, *Agreeable Agreement*, p164f.

⁹⁰ Tanner, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’, p145; Tanner, ‘Lutheran-Roman Catholic-Anglican Relations’, p3.

succession is seen as a rope comprised of several strands of continuity. Being ‘apostolic’ is a many-sided reality. Because each participating church recognises in all the others the same intention to be faithful in the past, and agrees to sign their shared intention to be faithful together into the future, in the historic episcopal succession, the Church of England is free to recognise those churches where, at the Reformation, the bishops were consecrated by a presbyter, but where the succession of bishops and the historic sees has been maintained, with subsequent bishops consecrating new bishops. In the same way, the churches of Denmark, Norway and Iceland are free to resume the use of the sign of historic episcopal succession.⁹¹

Tanner describes how, in the understanding of continuity and succession, the Porvoo Conversations were influenced by the Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue, and that succession is more about local churches than about individuals. She quotes the *Munich Statement*:

Apostolic continuity is transmitted through local churches. It is a matter of succession of persons in the community, because the *Una Sancta* is a communion of local churches and not of isolated individuals ... Apostolic succession ... is a succession in a Church which witnesses to the apostolic faith, in communion with other churches, witnesses of the same apostolic faith. The ‘see’ (cathedra) plays an important role in inserting the bishop into the heart of ecclesial apostolicity.⁹²

According to Tanner, it was this broader and more dynamic understanding of the Church’s succession and continuity that made it possible for the PCS to declare the churches concerned as free to recognise each other:

The new relationship of communion established by the Porvoo Declaration is based upon the intention of the churches to remain faithful in the past to the apostolic teaching and mission and also to sign that intention to be faithful *together* into the future in a single, reconciled episcopal ministry in the historic succession. While Porvoo refuses to make a negative judgement on the existing ministries of any of the participating churches, it at the same time maintains the requirement of historic episcopal succession as a requirement for the visible unity of the Church.⁹³

This broader understanding of succession and continuity is anchored in an ecclesiology of communion.

Halliburton also stressed the importance of the intention to preserve the churches episcopally ordered at the Reformation. He maintained that there was an irony in the ELCD’s hesitation about the PCS, since “it is most likely that the fullness of apostolic succession was maintained in Denmark in the

⁹¹ Tanner, ‘The Porvoo Agreement’, p145f; see also; Tanner, ‘The Anglican Position on Apostolic Continuity’, p122ff.

⁹² From the Orthodox-Roman Catholic Munich Statement from 1982. Quoted from; Tanner, ‘The Anglican Position on Apostolic Continuity’, p123.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p124.

Reformation of the sixteenth century as it was in all the other churches participating in these conversations”.⁹⁴ The Danish Reformation is usually understood as the Danes having lost episcopal succession, since the new bishops were presbyterally ordained by Bugenhagen. This was questioned by Halliburton. In contrast, he described the process differently: after the Danish civil war, the King Christian III realised that the ecclesial situation had to be dealt with. In the absence of true bishops, the Danish church lacked “both validity and regularity of orders”. This deficiency had also consequences for the possibility of the King being crowned. The King therefore turned to Wittenberg and Luther, since there was no possibility of turning to Rome, and Bugenhagen was sent to Denmark. According to Halliburton, Bugenhagen was not a mere priest, but a superintendent exercising a ministry of *episcopé*, considered by himself to be a bishop’s office,⁹⁵ also in the sense that he was an ordained bishop:

Bugenhagen himself would be the first to say that no one could assume the function of superintendent or bishop without being lawfully and canonically appointed. It was he, in fact, who, at Wittenberg, insisted that before taking up office as superintendent the traditional ceremony of appointment should take place. In the event, he was actually ‘consecrated’ by the parish clergy of Wittenberg, who laid hands on him and commissioned him to the work of oversight or superintendency. The evidence for this is a collection of fragments concerning the life of Dr Bugenhagen, currently held in the cathedral library of Canterbury. In one of these fragments is listed the names of those who laid hands on Bugenhagen in response to his stated request.

Immediately, of course, the question has to be asked, why the parish clergy, why the presbyters of Wittenberg? Could not a group of superintendents have been invited to perform such an important ceremony? And the answer to this is that the sixteenth-century German church had read not only of the presbyters consecrating a bishop at Alexandria, but were also convinced that the presbyter in the teaching of St Jerome held an authority in his own right, thus accounting for the action of the presbyters of Alexandria. This being the perception of the German church, the intention of the pastors of Wittenberg, in appointing Bugenhagen to Brunswick, was in every respect to make him a bishop; and as a bishop he was lawfully entitled to consecrate the seven bishops of Denmark to fill the vacant sees.⁹⁶

In the discussion whether the Porvoo solution is viable, the general perception has been that Bugenhagen was a presbyter. Halliburton argues that he was a superintendent, and that the intention in Denmark was to ordain new

⁹⁴ Halliburton, ‘Bishops Together in Mission and Ministry’, p255ff; Halliburton, ‘Orders and Ordination’; For a description of the same historic development, see; Halliburton, ‘Order and Episcopate’; Cf. Hill, ‘The Episcopal Office in the Nordic Lutheran Churches’, p29f.

⁹⁵ Halliburton, ‘Bishops Together in Mission and Ministry’, p256, 259.

⁹⁶ Ibid., p258f.

bishops.⁹⁷ That intention – as many of the Porvoo theologians emphasised – was crucial to the Porvoo solution and to its viability.

⁹⁷ I will discuss the important role of Bugenhagen and how he was ordained in Chapter 14.2.3.

8. Evaluation of the Porvoo debate

So far, the historical and ecumenical background to the PCS has been sketched in Chapter Two and the Porvoo debate investigated in Chapters Three to Seven. The intention of the current chapter is to compile the results of the investigation of the Porvoo debate in the three selected churches and in the related debate, and to see whether it is possible to discern any pattern in the discussion. The aim of this chapter is thus not only to offer a summary of the results, but also to set out the various contexts in which each argument was used. In order to do so, I will consider not only the different contexts that have been analysed, but also the different outcomes that emerged in each case.

8.1 The Porvoo debates in the sample churches

A comparison of the Porvoo debates in the three sample churches has revealed both similarities and differences. The different ecclesiological identities and constitutional situations in those churches are of great importance; and related to this, the different attitudes to episcopacy. In all the churches there were broad discussions of the document, but they were conducted in different ways.

8.1.1. The referral process

A similarity between the CoS and the CoE is that their discussions were held at diocesan level and decided upon in a General Synod. A difference was that the CoS referred the PCS to the dioceses and to different organisations in the church for discussion. In the CoE, the process was referred to as ‘Article 8 business’, which meant that the process went through two different sessions of the General Synod as well as through all the diocesan synods. In the ELCD, the lack of an independent ecclesial organisation with the competence to make a decision was obvious,¹ and determined the discussion. Due to this lack – or, as some Danes would prefer to describe it, *well ordered anarchy* – the referral process was conducted at parish level. The conse-

¹ A possible exception was CIR, but it did not take part in the formal decision making in the first process in 1994-1995, but only in the second decision process in 2009.

quence was that about 35,000 members, lay and clergy, came to be involved in the referral process, whereas in the CoE about 6,000 persons participated, and in the CoS it was considerably fewer. The weakness of the Danish process was that the discussion became very broad and even acrimonious, and in the end the bishops felt that they could not approve it. The difference in process led the bishop of Viborg, Karsten Nissen to comment that “you could indeed wonder, if the churches in Norway, Sweden and Finland were able to respond favourably to the PCS if they had gone through the same process”.² This might be a fair question, although it should be noted that from a constitutional perspective, nothing stopped the ELCD from also carrying out the process at diocesan level.

Another important difference is that there was better preparation for the process in both the CoS and the CoE than there was in the ELCD. While the ELCD chose to send the entire PCS for consideration in the church, the CoE sent only the PD for consideration together with a study guide. In referring the PCS for consideration, the CoS asked the dioceses and other organisations primarily to respond to the PD with ‘Yes’ or ‘No’, and secondly, also to reflect on the PCS as such. Another difference was that in the churches of Sweden and England, the PCS was published together with the essays, *Together in Mission and Ministry*, in the vernacular. A church history in Anglo-Nordic perspective by Lars Österlin was also published, along with study-guides and booklets about Porvoo, and seminars were held. The CoE published the study document *Apostolicity and Succession* as background to the PCS. The ELCD published only the PCS in the vernacular (a translation that was heavily criticised) together with a short foreword.

Furthermore, there were differences in how the PCS was related to and anchored in earlier ecumenical documents in Sweden and England as compared with the process in Denmark. As a whole, the Porvoo debates challenged the churches in their understanding of themselves and each other, and so became a learning process for the churches. In the ELCD the obvious need for a body independent of the Danish state and with the competence to make decisions, became a major stimulus of discussion in the ELCD to consider the development of a synodical structure for the church. This discussion remains ongoing in the ELCD. In a lecture in 1997, one year after the signing of the PCS, and apparently in disappointment over the Danish rejection of the PD, the CoE’s ecumenical officer Colin Podmore gave expression for this learning process:

In the Church of England, the Porvoo Agreement had to be considered by each of our 44 diocesan synods and approved by both the house of clergy and the house of laity of a majority of them before the General Synod could consider its final approval. That news was, I understand, quite startling to a Danish audience recently, since they supposed that in the Church of England they

² Nissen, ‘The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark and the Porvoo’, p1f.

were dealing with a *bispekirke* [i.e. “bishops-church”] (excuse my Danish) – a church of the bishops run by the bishops for the bishops. Actually the only church in which the final decision on the Porvoo Declaration was taken by a meeting consisting solely of bishops was the Church of Denmark.³

8.1.2. Different preconditions for making the decision

It would, however, diminish the real differences between the three churches if one attributed the different outcomes of their Porvoo debates solely to matters of procedure. Rather, the different procedures were a product of their different constitutions, which in turn are based on different traditions about episcopacy and its relation to the national state. The differences in ecclesiology and episcopacy are important reasons that the churches received the PCS differently. Important reasons are also to be found in the different histories of the churches; but there are significant developments in the understandings of ecclesiology and ordained ministry in the CoS and the CoE,⁴ caused by their ecumenical involvement, that are not the case in the ELCD.

Despite the geographic, linguistic and cultural proximity of Denmark and Sweden, the Danish process stands in contrast to the straightforward process and total unity in the CoS. It is possible to discern several reasons for this: First, the CoS has preserved episcopal succession and regards it as a gift of the Holy Spirit, while at the same time the CoS was in communion with those of the Porvoo churches that had a break in episcopal succession. This double understanding of episcopal succession in the CoS (as in the ELCF) was one reason why the Porvoo debate was brief and straightforward in the CoS. A second reason was that the CoS and the CoE already had a close relationship since 1922, and in the CoS the PCS was seen as an affirmation of this communion, which now also embraced the other Nordic-Baltic churches, rather than something new. A third reason was that the CoS, because of its international and ecumenical engagement, had already consciously developed a threefold ordained ministry of bishop, priest, and deacon.⁵ Also, the PCS was seen as a natural consequence of nearly a century of ecumenical dialogue and communion with the Anglican and Lutheran churches, rather than as a threat to the identity of the CoS and as a way to overcome its double understanding of episcopal succession. The PCS was seen to bring about a realised visible unity beyond the communion the churches had before the PCS, and beyond the limited perspective of a national church. A fourth reason was that, in contrast to the ELCD, the CoS had forums for discussion and decision both at diocesan and national level.

³ Podmore, ‘Porvoo: Text, Follow-up and Implications’, p1.

⁴ Cf. CoS, the Bishops’ Conference, *Bishop, Priest and Deacon in the CoS*; LRCDSF, *Justification in the Life of the Church*; LRCDS, *The Office of Bishop*; and for the CoE; CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*; CoE, House of Bishops, *Bishops in Communion*.

⁵ CoS, the Bishops’ Conference, *Bishop, Priest and Deacon in the CoS*.

In contrast, the preconditions were different in the ELCD. First, the Danish church is an integral part of the Danish state and has no formal institutions with the competence to make decisions. The bishops of the ELCD acted collectively by virtue of their office and their responsibility for doctrine, but formally they acted only as individual diocesan bishops. The forms and working procedures of the ELCD's newly-formed *Council on International Relations* (CIR) had not yet developed to the extent that it could play any decisive role in the process in 1994-1995. A second reason is that the 19th century revival movements evolved within the ELCD, and did not move beyond the church, with important consequences for its ecclesiological identity. The minimalist ecclesiology of those movements, which regarded 'Church' as primarily invisible and as something that *happens* rather than something that *is*, combined with a strong state taking care of the outer form of the church, have formed the ELCD as 'Christianity without a church'.⁶ This ecclesiology stood in contrast to the PCS and its emphasis on the visible unity of the Church. A third reason is that the ELCD understood ordained ministry foremost as a single order, in contrast to the threefold ministry in the CoS and CoE and as described in the PCS. In contrast to the theoretical emphasis in the ELCD, its ordination practice witnesses to a more differentiated ordained ministry into which the bishops are ordained. As a consequence of its ecclesiology and its understanding of ordained ministry, apostolicity was seen as being about *doctrine* in contrast to *episcopal succession*. In the final Danish approval of the PD it is possible to discern an opening up to a more developed understanding of ordained ministry. A fourth reason was the strong connection between nation and church, and that 'being Danish' became one of the most important marks of the ELCD, naturally producing suspicion about an international church communion and a protectionist attitude towards the PCS. This attitude stands in contrast to the history of the ELCD and its ecumenical engagement, most clearly during the episcopate of the Bishop Fuglesang-Damgaard of Copenhagen. In the Danish Porvoo debate, the freedom of the church was emphasised – freedom not from the state, but from the other churches of the Porvoo Communion.

The situation was different in the CoE. First, as part of a world communion with its roots in the British Empire, she had been challenged to consider the ecclesiological identity of Anglicanism,⁷ especially since the former British Empire had been changed by political developments. Since the Archbishop of Canterbury is the head of the Anglican Communion, it has been necessary for the CoE to consider the relations between the different parts of the communion and to reflect on them ecclesologically. A second reason is that in the CoE, as in the CoS, the BEM document has been influential for

⁶ Raun Iversen, 'Den kirkeløse kristendom i Danmark', p13ff; Chapter 5.1.

⁷ See e.g. Sachs, *The Transformation of Anglicanism*.

the development of church and order and for its ecumenical engagement.⁸ Through BEM and through ecumenical contacts, the CoE has developed its understanding of Anglicanism, ecclesiology, episcopacy, and ordained ministry. In this perspective the PCS can be seen as one of several expressions of this development in the CoE. Other expressions are the *Meissen Agreement*, the so-called *Cameron Report* on the episcopal ministry,⁹ the House of Bishops' *Apostolicity and Succession*, and other ecumenical dialogues. A third reason is the preserved historic episcopate in the CoE. However, the CoE's traditional emphasis on episcopal succession as a question of individual ordinations, rather than as being about whole churches, was challenged by the PCS. A fourth reason is that church law is more developed in the CoE than in the CoS or the ELCD. That the PCS was referred to as 'Article 8 business' is an expression of this; it means that the CoE's church law is formulated with such specificity that it regulates how a single matter for decision, such as the PCS, shall be dealt with. In the CoS and the ELCD the PCS was treated in a less regulated way. A more important indication of the CoE's more developed church law and its relation to theology is the way in which the CoE is synodically organised. This synodical organisation is gathered around the bishops, as it is described in the PCS, both at diocesan and at national level. In contrast, the synodical organisation in the CoS exists in parallel with the episcopal structure of the church, with tensions between the episcopal order and the democratic organisation, and in contrast with the episcopal nature of the church. The ELCD still lacks any form of synodical organisation other than the parliament of the Danish state, although the CIR is the embryo of something new. Like the synodical organisation of the CoS, this discussion about the CIR and synodical order in the ELCD points to a new organisation parallel with the episcopal structure of the church, even though the CoS's church organisation is constantly criticised in internal CoS debates.

8.1.3. The evaluation of the PCS

The ELCD based its official evaluation on an ecclesiology that sees church primarily as invisible, and unity as a functional unity of cooperation. So the PCS was not seen to be necessary, but could serve as an inspiration for such cooperation. In the ELCD's response to the PCS, there was a tension between its statement that the PCS contained no church-dividing issues, and its critique of the PCS that indicated that there were, after all, not that few church-dividing factors. Behind this ambiguous answer was the extended and sometimes indignant Danish discussion, which was mainly negative and regarded the PCS as non-Lutheran and as a threat. The Danish approach to

⁸ Cf. Tanner, 'The Effect of BEM on the CoE'.

⁹ CoE, *Episcopal Ministry*.

the PCS was primarily about whether or not the PCS expressed the identity of the ELCD. The PCS was primarily understood either as a changed Anglican understanding of the historic episcopate, or as a way for the Anglican churches to impose episcopal succession on the free ELCD. A third understanding, less common in the Danish debate, was that in the PCS the Anglican churches had become open to a broader understanding, but still preserving episcopal succession. This third interpretation of the PCS did not generally consider whether this also meant a changed or broadened understanding for the ELCD; rather, it was emphasised that the PCS was consistent with the ELCD's Lutheran identity. In perspective of the ecumenical methods, described in Chapter Two, the Danish approach did not consider the christological and pneumatological method or goal of the PCS, but was engaged in a process of comparison rather than dialogue and with openness to change.

The hesitant approach of the ELCD in 1995 eventuated in an affirmative decision 14 years later, in 2009, and the signing of the PD in 2010. The motivation for the Danish approval of the PCS, however, was a kind of negative one, based on changes it claimed had taken place in the other Porvoo churches, rather than on a reception of the PCS as an ecclesiological option for the ELCD. Those changes related to female bishops, the dean as minister of ordination, and the preservation of independence for the ELCD. The main objections from the 1994-1995 discussion about episcopacy and episcopal succession in the PCS did not play any vital role in the process that led to the signing. It is possible that the Danish emphasis on the dean as *ordaining minister* in practice served as a substitute for those questions. The formal Danish process that led to the approval of the PD seems to have been primarily a product of diplomacy rather than a theologically-based motivation. If the focus had been on the question of apostolic succession, it is most likely that the ELCD would not have been willing to sign the declaration. This unresolved issue is not without consequences, since it was specifically stated that the ELCD did not approve the PCS, only the PD – even though the first section of the PD states that it is based on the common understanding “contained in Chapters II-IV of *The Porvoo Common Statement*.”¹⁰ A second consequence is that the ELCD, in opposition to the PD and as an expression of its intention to remain free, still does not allow bishops from the Porvoo Communion to participate in the ordinations of bishops in the ELCD. Thus the ELCD has approved the PD and yet in a sacramental perspective stands outside the Porvoo Communion.¹¹ Behind this practise lie diverging ecclesologies, concepts of unity, and evaluations of episcopacy and ordination.

CoS viewed the PCS as a fruit of the international ecumenical movement, and as a deepened understanding of apostolicity that embraced both the traditional Lutheran emphasis on apostolicity as doctrine and the traditional

¹⁰ PCS/PD §58.

¹¹ I will explain this issue further in Capters 13, 14, 15, and 16.

Anglican emphasis on episcopal succession. The PCS was seen mainly as confirmation of an existing relationship with the CoE and as a broadening of this communion to embrace all the Nordic-Baltic churches. The decision in the CoS was unanimous. However, a negative consequence of this unanimous decision was that the ecclesiological basis of the PCS was not really discussed, and so has not been adequately received and integrated into the official documents of the CoS. A contributing factor to this could be that the CoS has been much occupied, since the signing of the PD, with the process of dis-establishment.

In the CoE the decision was nearly unanimous, but with relatively little debate. The reactions against the PCS were mainly focused on the Porvoo solution that said it was possible for those churches that had preserved episcopal succession to recognise an ordained ministry with an occasional break as authentically apostolic. The issue in question was thus the validity of an order with a break in its succession. The CoE regarded the PCS as having helped to deepen and clarify its own understanding of apostolicity, and it has worked the PCS understanding of ecclesiology and ordained ministry into its own official documents.¹²

8.2. Overview of the international discussion

When the PCS was made public in 1993, it was received by the international ecumenical community with great interest. This interest produced many evaluations by theologians from various ecclesial backgrounds. Treated as a whole it is possible to discern a pattern in the various reactions. The confessional answers – i.e., the formal answers of the *Vereinigte Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche Deutschlands* (The United Evangelical Lutheran Church of Germany) (VELDK), the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, and the Old Catholic response, as well as of individual theologians who wrote from the perspective of their own church – were more restrictive than those of theologians who could be regarded as representatives of the ecumenical movement. Those two positions are opposite poles rather than totally divided from each other, since ecumenists also wrote from denominational perspectives, and the confessional representatives related to ecumenism. Nevertheless, the character of the answers is clearly discernible in relation to the two poles here described. This pattern may indicate that those theologians who were trained in ecumenical theology more easily discerned the ecumenical method underlying the PCS. Without an anchoring in ecumenical theology, the critics easily focused on the ecclesial marks of their own traditions, and consequently made a negative evaluation of the PCS when they could not find the formulations to which they were accustomed.

¹² I will discuss the issue of implementation of the PCS in the Porvoo churches in Chapter 16.

Another pattern relates to the heuristic concepts *protestant* and *catholic*. Even though those concepts are not exact in their content, they are useful to describe responses to the PCS.¹³ The protestant perspective played down the importance of episcopal succession and ordained ministry, with the result that the PCS was seen to be too catholic and too sacramental. From a catholic perspective, the PCS and its view of ecclesiology and apostolicity was greeted with satisfaction, or – contrary to the protestant interpretation – it was seen as a problem that the PCS did not emphasise the sacramental line of ordination more.¹⁴ The two positions – catholic and protestant – represent two different interpretations of the CA 7 and its *satis est*, with two different evaluations of the PCS as a result. While the protestant understanding reads CA 7 in a minimalist sense as word and sacrament, the catholic approach includes ordained ministry in the prerequisites for the *satis est* in CA 7.

The aim of the PCS is to move beyond “existing piecemeal agreements” towards the visible and corporate unity of the churches.¹⁵ The critique of the reliability of the solution was often met with piecemeal explanations that did not convince the critics. Given that the PCS explicitly says that ordained ministry is to be understood in the perspective of its ecclesiology and the apostolicity of the Church as a whole, it is striking that the PCS was generally interpreted non-ecclesiologicaly. Instead, it was evaluated from the perspective of the respective church contexts and confessions and their well-established understandings of ordained ministry and succession. The discussions were focused in general on the question of episcopacy and ‘mechanical succession’ but, among both advocates and critics, without the ecclesiology. Traditional concepts about ordained ministry were generally sought, e.g. whether it was valid or non-valid, or whether the PCS treats episcopal succession as *esse*, *bene esse*, or *plene esse* of the Church. Since the Porvoo approach is different and deliberately avoids the use of any of those concepts, the content and basis of the PCS’s radical claim were missed by many. The Porvoo debate focused to a great extent on episcopal succession and whether or not it is necessary or whether a ministry with a break in the succession could be recognised as valid.

However, both the advocates and the critics often failed to consider the extended ecclesiological perspective described in the PCS. This perspective is the content of the claim by the PCS of a “deeper understanding of apostolicity, of the episcopal office, and of historic succession as ‘sign’”.¹⁶ Also, when

¹³ For a description of those two approaches, see; Brodd, ‘The Hidden Agenda’; Jones, ‘Visibility as Ecclesiological Criterion’.

¹⁴ For a description of the present Lutheran ecclesiological understanding in perspective of those two concepts see; Brodd, ‘The Hidden Agenda’ Brodd emphasises that Lutheranism in its ecclesiological understanding is divided between protestant and catholic/sacramental understanding which direct the ecumenical attitude.

¹⁵ PCS Foreword, §6, 22.

¹⁶ PCS Foreword, §9.

the Porvoo solution was reasoned through a reference to the ecclesiological approach, it was often described in a way that did not convince its critics of the theological solidity of the PCS, since they thought that it was a departure from a consistent theology.

8.3. Contents of the Porvoo debate

We now turn to the content of the Porvoo debate in the three sample churches and in the international debate, and how they related to each other. Through our schematic ordering of the different questions in relation to the PCS, we shall find that the contexts of the debate mirror each other. In the Porvoo debate it was common that the the same issue, such as whether or not episcopacy is necessary, was discussed in both the ELCD and the RCC, but with opposite evaluations. This is more than a mere observation, since both sides could probably learn from one other about the weaknesses or exaggerations in their own traditions. The analysis of the three sample churches and the international discussion, has demonstrated a range of issues concerning the PCS which require further investigation. Viewed together, they can deepen the understanding of episcopal succession and its relation to ecclesiology and the apostolicity of the Church. The conclusions of my investigation of the Porvoo debate can schematically be pictured as below:

| | ELCD/Protestant | | CoS | CoE | RCC/Orthodox |
|--|--|----------------------------|--|-----|--|
| 1. Evaluation of PCS | Changed Anglican understanding of episcopal succession | | | | Changed Anglican understanding of episcopal succession |
| | | | Changed understanding of episcopal succession of all Porvoo churches | | |
| 2. Church as invisible/visible | Invisible church | | | | |
| | | | Visible church | | |
| 3. Episcopal succession | | Possible but not necessary | | | Necessary for the true church |
| | Threat to the apostolicity | | Gift by H.S. | | |
| 4. Double approach | | | Episcopal succession a sign, but not a guarantee | | |
| 5. Ordination | Non-sacramental | | | | |
| | | | Sacramental | | |
| 6. PCS as <i>ecclesia supplet</i> solution | | | | | <i>Ecclesia supplet</i> |
| 7. Eschatology | | | | | Open for development |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------|
| 8. Unity and catholicity | | | | Open for development |
|--------------------------|--|--|--|----------------------|

The illustration shows the main issues raised in the different contexts of the Porvoo debate. Below I comment on each position numbered in the graph:

1. The evaluation of the Porvoo solution: The Porvoo solution was interpreted in the ELCD as if the CoE had changed its understanding of episcopal succession and no longer regarded it as necessary. The PCS was understood as if the CoE had adopted (or at least come closer to) the Danish understanding of apostolic succession. In contrast, a second interpretation in the ELCD read the PCS as saying that the CoE had not changed its appreciation of episcopal succession but had “closed their eyes for a while” until episcopal succession was introduced into the ELCD. This interpretation is related to the evaluation of the RC Morerod and the Orthodox Tudorie, who saw the PCS as a diplomatic way of resolving an unsolved theological dilemma. This description of the PCS was contradicted by the RC Fuchs, who maintained that the PCS is a sacramental solution. A third interpretation in the ELCD said that the CoE had broadened its understanding of apostolicity without diminishing its appreciation of episcopal succession. The final Danish approval was motivated by the claimed changes in the other Porvoo Churches, and with the explicit statement that the PCS did not change the confession or identity of the ELCD. In the Danish Parliamentary Church Committee an assurance was specifically given that the approval of the PD would not mean the introduction of episcopal succession in the ELCD.

In the CoE it was clearly and formally stated that the PCS contained a deepened and clarified understanding of apostolic succession. The CoE did not ask particularly whether this also meant a changed understanding in the Lutheran Porvoo churches. There were Anglican theologians who stated that the PCS represented a mutual transformation that went beyond earlier denominational identities. The allegedly changed Anglican understanding of apostolic succession was based on a deepened view of apostolicity in the ecumenical movement, as adopted by the Anglican churches. In that sense also, the change in the Nordic-Baltic churches was recognised. The changed understanding was heavily criticised by some Anglican and RC theologians as a break from – rather than as a development of – Anglican tradition, and as a move in a more protestant direction. This interpretation is, at its core, about the validity of ordination and ordained ministry – an issue that, in one way or another, was present in every context in which the PCS was discussed.

In the CoS the PCS was explained as a deepened understanding of apostolic succession based on BEM and Niagara, expressed in an ecclesiology that embraces both Lutheran and Anglican understandings as *successio doctrinae* and *successio manuum* respectively. This was stated in a general Lu-

theran-Anglican perspective, and did not particularly reflect the specific CoS tradition about episcopacy.

In the international Porvoo debate, most theologians did not ask whether the PCS represented a change in the Anglican or the Lutheran churches. Rather, they focused on specific issues of the theology presented in the PCS. In contrast, the majority of the Porvoo delegates did emphasise the same understanding as that of the Central Board of the CoS: that the PCS contained a deepened and changed understanding of apostolicity and episcopal succession for all the Porvoo churches. The same point was stated by Roelvink, Root, Fuchs, and Burkhard. The theologians who expressed this perspective said essentially what the two Porvoo Co-Chairmen, Bishops Tustin and Furberg, had written in the Foreword to the PCS, that the PCS offers a deeper understanding of apostolicity and succession.¹⁷

2. Church as visible or invisible: The main issue behind the evaluation of the PCS in the ELCD was the question of the Church's visibility. In the ELCD discussion there were strong reactions against the Porvoo emphasis on the unity of the Church as visible unity. Behind this critique is the ecclesiology of the 19th century revival movements, the 'free-congregations' (*fri-menigheder*), and the Grundtvigian movement in the ELCD. Christianity is primarily seen as individualistic piety, and the Church is understood on the basis of a minimalist interpretation of CA 7, more as something that *happens* than something that *is*. The common priesthood and CA 7's proclamation of the word and the administration of the sacraments are emphasised. In the Danish Porvoo debate, this ecclesiology was often defined as 'Lutheran' in contrast with the PCS and the other Lutheran churches.

3. Episcopal succession and CA 7: Much of the Porvoo debate in the ELCD and among protestant theologians focused on how ordained ministry shall be related to the two necessities of CA 7. The late 20th century description of the Church as a sacramental communion played a very modest role in the discussion. The discussion focused instead on episcopacy and whether or not it should be regarded as necessary, as *iure divino* or *iure humano*, and on whether episcopal succession is necessary or contingent. This question also relates to *iure divino* in CA 28, and whether it should be interpreted as being about episcopacy as such, or whether it refers to the function of *episcopé*. It was stated that Lutherans principally have no problem with episcopacy and threefold order, but that if this were made a necessity it would be unacceptable, since that would undermine the *satis est* in CA 7. This was also the understanding of Madson and the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod. The position was criticised by Anglican theologians as anachronistic, and that in practice it adds more prerequisites for unity than the *satis est* does.

The protestant or minimalist interpretation of CA 7 relates further to how ordained ministry is understood: Is it one or three, or is it one with three

¹⁷ PCS Foreword §9.

forms? The Danish Porvoo debate also raised the question whether it is possible to have several different understandings of episcopacy in the Porvoo Communion. And in that case, how diverse can such interpretations of episcopacy be while still seriously claiming to be a communion based on episcopacy and a common spiritual life?

A negative interpretation of episcopal succession meant that the emphasis on episcopal succession contradicts the true apostolicity of the Church, which basically has to do with the Church's teaching. This was stated by the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod and in the ELCD.¹⁸ In contrast, Orthodox, RC, and some Anglican theologians stated that episcopal succession is necessary and that the Church is not apostolic, or fully apostolic, without it. This was based on an understanding of ordained ministry as more-or-less ecclesologically integrated, and more-or-less exclusively that apostolicity basically has to do with episcopal succession. For most of the catholic theologians, episcopal succession was viewed as necessary, but not sufficient for apostolicity.

4. Episcopal succession as a sign but not a guarantee: In the CoS, one reason for the straightforward process and unanimous decision was the CoS's dual approach to episcopal succession, formulated in the Letter from the Swedish episcopate in 1922. There are historical reasons in the CoS for this approach to episcopal succession as both a gift from God and as non-necessary. Madson found the dual approach of the CoS to be contradictory, since she interpreted it as an emphasis on the historic episcopal order that is simultaneously open to presbyterally-ordained ministers. In contrast, Root evaluated the Letter positively as an early attempt to express a "Lutheran perspective which sought to understand episcopacy neither as an *ius divinum* nor as an adiaphoron in the strict sense of an indifferent matter, but as something requiring some additional theological category".¹⁹

The Reformed Birmelé, the Lutherans Madson, Dalferth, Busch-Nielsen and Hietamäki, the Methodist Wainwright, and the RC Morerod criticised the CoE's approach to apostolicity. They asked how the CoE could regard episcopal succession as an effective and necessary sign and a precondition for unity, at the same time that she recognises the validity of the sacraments celebrated in the Meissen churches lacking this necessary sign. They found this to be a contradiction. Related to those questions is the statement in the BEM, echoed in the PCS, that describes episcopal succession as "a sign but not a guarantee", which implies that there is a tension between 'to receive' on the one hand, and 'to possess or to have' on the other hand, in the life of the Church.

5. Ordination as sacramental or not: In the critique of the PCS by Anglican, RC, and Orthodox theologians, the sacramental line of ordination was

¹⁸ For a recent formulation of this view see; Nørgaard-Højen, *Økumenisk Teologi*.

¹⁹ Root, 'Porvoo in the Context of the Worldwide Anglican-Lutheran Dialogue', p17f.

emphasised. It was stated that in RC and Orthodox teaching, as in the PCS, episcopacy has to be understood in its ecclesiological context; but this does not make episcopacy optional. The Anglican metaphor of apostolicity – as a rope of several strands that can compensate if one breaks – did not convince these theologians. The metaphor was used to explain the Porvoo solution and the understanding of principle taken from BEM that episcopal succession is “a sign but not a guarantee”. This principle is criticised in the official RC response to BEM as not sufficiently emphasising the importance of episcopal succession and sacramental ordination.²⁰ Some of the RC theologians were not convinced by the explanations that were given in the PCS or by its defender, and found the PCS incompatible with RC teaching.²¹ From the Orthodox perspective, it was stated that “there can be historic succession without apostolic fidelity, but there can be no full apostolic fidelity without the historic episcopal succession”.²² In this catholic view, episcopal succession is necessary for the apostolicity of the Church, even though it is not a sufficient sign in itself of the Church’s apostolicity. Related to this interpretation is the understanding of ordination. It was asked how Bugenhagen who did not himself have the episcopal ministry can confer episcopal order on the persons he ordained in 1537. This question concerns the validity of ordination and, by extension, the validity of the sacramental acts that those who were so ordained have conducted since. This question also relates to the ordination history of Bugenhagen. What kind of ministry did Bugenhagen exercise, and how was he ordained? As we have seen, Halliburton maintained that Bugenhagen was actually ordained superintendent/bishop.

6. PCS as an *ecclesia supplet* solution: Other RC theologians evaluated the PCS positively, based on its sacramental *communio* ecclesiology and on the Porvoo solution understood as an *ecclesia supplet* solution. Like the PCS, those RC theologians did not focus on the question of validity, but neither did they deny its importance.²³

7. Weak eschatology in the PCS: The RC Henn and Puglisi stressed that there is an exaggerated focus in the PCS on historical continuity, and that this weakness is due to a lack of an elaborated eschatology in the document. With a more elaborated eschatological anchoring of the ecclesiology, there could have been a more balanced understanding of apostolicity and of episcopal succession. This evaluation by Henn and Puglisi was made with reference to Zizioulas.

8. The unity and catholicity of the Church: Roelvink emphasised the importance of the catholicity of the Church, and how the unity of the universal Church is understood and works in practice. Roelvink argued that this

²⁰ RCC, ‘Respond to BEM by the Roman Catholic Church’, p33.

²¹ Edward Yarnold, Charles Morerod, Georg Tavad and Francis Sullivan.

²² Bouteneff, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p242f.

²³ Henrik Roelvink, Lorelei F. Fuchs, John J. Burkhard, James Puglisi and William Henn.

was an underdeveloped side of the PCS, although the document contained hints of it.

8.4. Final remarks, and order of investigation

Based on this summary and the pattern I have discerned in the Porvoo debate, I turn now to the order in which the next part of my investigation will be conducted. As stated in Chapter 1, it is my intention in Part III to analyse the arguments for and against the Porvoo solution as discerned in the Porvoo debate. This analysis will be done theologically and historically in order to deepen the understanding of the PCS and, if possible, to develop the content of the PCS. The analysis in Part III will be conducted thematically.

The themes will be arranged in an order through which the themes, separately and together, deepen our understanding of the problem areas that were discerned in Part II, and thus contribute to a developed understanding of apostolic succession in the PCS. This order will help the themes to speak together about a deepened Porvoo ecclesiology, and to search for solutions to the problem areas identified in Part II:

1. The use of history. An important issue both in the PCS and in the Porvoo debate is how the history of the Church and the Reformation is perceived. This perception is also crucial as a prerequisite for the method to find *unity through a deeper understanding*.
2. The visibility of the Church. This question relates to the discussion about CA 7 and its relation to ordained ministry.
3. The sacramental understanding of Church and ordained ministry is vital in the PCS, but it was questioned by many in the Danish Porvoo discussion. What does it mean that the PCS has a sacramental understanding?
4. Crucial to the Porvoo solution is its emphasis on episcopal succession at the same time that it declares that those churches that occasionally experienced a break in the succession still have an apostolic episcopal ministry. The two aspects of the solution are linked and are held together with help of the notion of *a sign, although not a guarantee*.
5. Ordained ministry and the threefold order. How is order understood, and what is the content of the claim of episcopacy as either necessary or not? The PCS, like BEM, states that the threefold ministry “may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it”.²⁴ How should this notion be understood?

²⁴ PCS §32j.

6. In all the contexts investigated, the question of validity influenced the discussion in one way or another. What is the content and background to the search for validity?
7. The mission of the Church in the PCS is anchored in eschatology and the final salvation of humanity and the world. This perspective and the eschatological anchoring of the Church is important in order to understand apostolicity as a mark of the Church.
8. The sacramental *koinonia* ecclesiology, as described in the PCS, sees unity not only as apostolic but also as catholic. How can this be made concrete in the Porvoo Communion?

The eight points described here are defined as a whole by an internal sequence of argument. This sequence starts with the critique formulated in the Porvoo debates that was investigated in Part II, and concludes with constructive suggestions for a deepening of the PCS. The result of the descriptive analysis in Part II, read in relation to and in dialogue with itself, has thus provided the means to take the next step in the investigation – namely, the thematically constructive analysis in Part III.

Part III: Analysis of the arguments for or against the PCS

This investigation so far has demonstrated that the problems related to the PCS and its reception could be compared to a battle waged on two fronts. On the one hand, it was difficult for the Porvoo theologians to convince those who held a *Protestant position* about the advantages of a renewed appreciation of episcopacy and episcopal succession, as described in PCS §57. On the other hand, it was difficult to convince those theologians – Anglican, Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Old-Catholic – who regarded the Porvoo solution as merely a diplomatic solution, that the PCS offers a theologically-based solution to realising the visible unity of the Porvoo churches. The two fronts could be described as the difficulties, on the one hand, of convincing the *Protestant position* about a sacramental ecclesiology and understanding of ordination and episcopacy; and, on the other hand, of convincing what I have chosen to call the *ontological position* that this sacramental understanding is not exclusively linked to the sign of unbroken episcopal succession, while also stressing that the PCS does not mean a downgrading of this element. Since the majority of the catholic-minded theologians (cf. chapter 8.2.) evaluated the PCS positively, I refer to those theologians who represented a negative catholic evaluation of the PCS as the *ontological position*. Between the *protestant* and *ontological* positions there were large majorities in the Porvoo churches, as well as many individual theologians, who welcomed the solution. As has been noted, such a positive reception does not necessarily mean that the deeper ecclesiological understanding that the PCS claims to offer was understood, received, or implemented.

The objections of the two positions relate to a broad spectrum of theological and historical issues, some of which relate to both positions but are evaluated in opposite ways. Those objections point to issues that were not clarified in the Porvoo debate, in the PCS or, to some extent, in the general ecumenical discussion. In order to find out whether it is possible to bridge the *gap* between the PCS and the various interpretations of the statement, I will investigate those issues discerned in Part II that speak of the theological basis for the churches' traditional teaching.

There are at least three reasons for the gap described here. One is the cognitive gap between those who wrote the PCS, based on their knowledge of

church history, theology, and the ecumenical documents behind the PCS, and those who interpreted the same document but without those historical and ecumenical prerequisites.¹ A second reason is the churches' different terminological traditions, meaning that the same terms could have various connotations in different contexts. Conversely, the churches' diverse terminology could signify the same understanding.² When the PCS was translated into the languages of the Porvoo region, it was confirmed that "terminological questions are crucial and sometimes even detrimental to a common understanding of the theology of ordained ministry".³ This affected how the PCS was understood in the Porvoo churches. A third reason has to do with the nature of an ecumenical agreement. As Bishop Sykes has pointed out, without a gap between "the theological content of a doctrine in an ecumenical document and the same doctrine developed and justified within a particular theological or ecclesial tradition" there is no need for ecumenical agreements in the first place.⁴ The question is whether this gap is theologically justified and, in that case, challenges the churches to be transformed into visible unity through a process of renewal and implementation. It is necessary, therefore, to search for possible ways to understand the content of this gap through an analysis of the historical and theological basis for the arguments for or against the PCS, and to investigate suggestions of ways to improve the PCS. That is the aim of Part III.

The 'gap' described here is confirmed by the pattern of the Porvoo debate discerned in Part II. It revealed that theologians trained in ecumenical theology more easily discerned the method in the PCS, while those who responded to the PCS from a confessional perspective were normally more restrictive in their evaluation of the statement.

While the method in the PCS is to start with the Trinity, which then shapes ecclesiology, faith, order, and episcopal succession, I will work in the opposite direction – from the parts to the whole. This direction is chosen because it gives the opportunity to investigate systematically the critique in the various contexts, and to treat them as resources in order to understand the PCS better. I will start with a treatment of how history is used in the PCS and the historical prerequisite for the method in the PCS. This will be followed by investigations of the church as visible or invisible; ordination as sacramental or not; the PCS's use of *sign* and *guarantee*; ordained ministry as one or three; the understanding of validity and validation; and finally, substantive apostolicity in pneumatological and eschatological perspective.

¹ This kind of gap was already described in; ALIC, 'Pullach', p25, §11.

² Noted in *ibid.*, p25, §12.

³ Cf. BEM, M§7; "Differences in terminology are part of the matter under debate" and Raun Iversen, 'Purpose, Background and Methodological Issues', p24f.

⁴ Sykes, 'The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS', p89.

9. History as prerequisite for the method in the PCS

In the presentation of the PCS in Chapter Two, it was established that the method in the PCS – and a prerequisite for the Porvoo solution – was taken for granted rather than explicitly described. Due to this method the ecclesiology of the PCS aims to embrace earlier ecclesiologies of the churches concerned and to join them in a visible and corporate unity that went beyond earlier denominational differences. Through this deeper joint ecclesiology, earlier conceptions of apostolic succession, such as *successio doctrinae* or *successio manuum*, are embraced, integrated and expressed as *substantive apostolicity*.

In the Porvoo debate, the PCS's deepening and merging of earlier positions was accused of being a syncretistic approach that mixed different confessions,⁵ and as a merely diplomatic process.⁶ These kinds of critique were the outcome of an evaluation that was based on a comparative approach to ecumenism, comparing the PCS's content with one or the other confession. The problem with such a comparative approach is that it does not sufficiently consider the nature of the *gap* described in the introduction to Part III, and the purpose of ecumenical dialogue, that is, to overcome confessional disagreements. The comparative approach is suitable for clarifying the *gap* between a traditional perception of a particular doctrine in an ecclesial tradition and the elaboration of this same doctrine in an ecumenical dialogue document. However, by itself it is not sufficient to evaluate an ecumenical statement that is written in a christological and pneumatological perspective that intends to embrace earlier divisive issues and that is based on the conviction that the visible unity is found in Christ beyond earlier denominational divisions.⁷

An example of the comparative approach and of its inadequacy to judge the theological reliability of such an ecumenical agreement is the critique formulated by Morerod, when he noted that the responses of the Porvoo

⁵ Tudorie, 'Porvoo Common Statement from an Orthodox Perspective', p72; Tudorie, 'Theological Dialogue', p133.

⁶ Morerod, 'Reflections on Five Recent Agreements', p122.

⁷ Cf. chapter 2.1 about ecumenical method as *comparative*, *christological* or *pneumatological* to its character.

churches to BEM about episcopacy were diverse.⁸ However, it is those earlier differences that the PCS claims to have resolved through its deeper description of ecclesiology and apostolic succession. It is those differences that constitute “the longstanding problem about episcopal ministry and its relation to succession”,⁹ which the PCS claims to have solved. Morerod’s critique misses the main point of the Porvoo solution, although his critique is a valuable reminder that the prerequisite for the Porvoo solution, and for the deeper communion achieved by the Porvoo churches, is the Porvoo churches’ mutual conversion to the deeper ecclesiology – and through this renewal, their transformation into the Porvoo Communion.¹⁰

From the insufficiency of the comparative approach towards ecumenical agreement, it does not necessarily follow, however, that the PCS’s method is possible. Rather, the “embracing” method needs to be investigated to find out whether the Porvoo solution is theologically justifiable, or whether the critics were right when they described it as merely human diplomacy. The purpose of this ninth chapter is to investigate the nature of, and the prerequisites for, the PCS’s method and thus to lay the basis for continuing analysis.

The PCS text does not contain many methodological considerations, besides the chairmen’s description of the statement’s outline in the Foreword. The absence of a more clearly spelled out description of the Porvoo method could be regarded as a weakness in the statement. If the method had been more clearly described, much confusion in the Porvoo debate about the meaning of the PCS would probably have been avoided. Such a description could also have helped the reader to understand why a description of the church in new terminology could be fully valid for a particular confession to receive and implement it in its own church.

Crucial to the Porvoo method is its use of history. It is through the history of the churches concerned that the PCS argues for the Porvoo solution.¹¹ An investigation of the relation between the PCS and history needs to consider two different perspectives: The first is how the PCS uses history as a basis for the Porvoo solution – that is, how the history of the Porvoo churches is described? The second perspective is a more general discussion about history as the prerequisite for the method in the PCS. The method is based on the development of the Church and its division into various ecclesial and confessional traditions. Had there been a different historical development, the method might not have been possible – or at least, not in the same sense as is elaborated in the PCS. These two perspectives on the role of history in the PCS could be described as one being visible and the other being less visible. The first is the description of the history of the churches, and the second is

⁸ See chapter 6.4.2.

⁹ PCS §34.

¹⁰ See further Part IV, Chapter 16.

¹¹ Cf. PCS §34, 49.

how the history of the Church is the prerequisite for the method in the PCS. Since the method is not discussed much in the PCS, the second perspective on history is less visible, but it is nevertheless crucial.

I will start with a critical analysis of the PCS's use of history, followed by a discussion of history as a prerequisite for the "embracing" method. Thirdly, I will address how the conceptions of ecclesiology and ordained ministry have developed through the course of history, and how they constitute the historical prerequisite for the method in the PCS.

9.1. The use of history in the PCS

History is used in the PCS, on the one hand, to demonstrate the historical togetherness of the Porvoo churches and, on the other hand, to loosen up and relativise divisive church issues.¹² Through this double use of history, the historical basis is laid for the Porvoo solution. The mutual contacts of the churches during missionary times and the fact that the churches have never condemned each other, are emphasised,¹³ and that the churches "stand in continuity with the Church of the patristic and medieval period both directly and through the insights of the Reformation period".¹⁴ Reformation history is interpreted as the intention "to secure the apostolic continuity of the Church as a Church of the Gospel served by an episcopal ministry".¹⁵ This continuity is elaborated on in §49:

The continuity signified in the consecration of a bishop to episcopal ministry cannot be divorced from the continuity of life and witness of the diocese to which he is called. In the particular circumstances of our churches, the continuity represented by the occupation of the historic sees is more than personal. The care to maintain a diocesan and parochial pattern of pastoral life and ministry reflects an intention of the churches to continue to exercise the apostolic ministry of word and sacrament of the universal Church.

The historical background to the PCS is further described in the historical essays appended to the statement in the official copy of the PCS, *Together in Mission and Ministry*. These essays describe the complex history of the Reformation, and emphasise both the political process and the tensions between the Danish episcopate that was in a state of grave decay, a distant papacy that lacked sensitivity to the problem, and an emerging national con-

¹² Cf. Chapter 2.1. and 2.2.

¹³ PCS §29, cf. also EKD/CoE, 'Meissen', p134, §10; ALIC, 'Niagara', p105, §60.

¹⁴ PCS §7.

¹⁵ PCS §34.

sciousness among the monarchs and the nobility.¹⁶ The publication of the essays together with the PCS is explained by the chairmen:

Since this part of the report [chapter IV] arises from the empirical reality of church life in twelve different countries, we refer the reader to the series of twelve short historical essays on Episcopacy in our Churches and Canon Christopher Hill's Introduction to the Essays on Church and Ministry in Northern Europe. Regarding the Lutheran understanding of ordination in the Nordic and Baltic churches, Anglican readers will be helped by Canon John Halliburton's analysis of the ordinals in current use.¹⁷

That last sentence reveals an interesting imbalance between the two counterparts. It states that *Anglican readers will be helped* by the essays; but why is this not also true for so-called 'Lutheran' readers – especially since Halliburton covers all the rites of the churches involved in Porvoo, and his essay would therefore be of equal interest to all the participating churches?¹⁸ Does this imbalance show that the chairmen supposed that the agreement's proposal and ordination in the Lutheran churches were more controversial for Anglicans than the other way round? Or does it mean that the Anglican rite was better known in the Nordic and Baltic countries than the other way round? While this might be seen as a rather minor side remark, it does point to a deficiency in the use of history in the PCS.

The intention of the essays was to give the reader a historical perspective and an explanation of the context. Most of the essays were written by individuals who covered the various churches.¹⁹ Such an approach is fully satisfactory if the subject is a presentation about one particular church. However, such a comparative approach is not sufficient in itself, if the purpose is to establish the reliability of the *deeper understanding* that the PCS claims to present. The more general essays in *Together in Mission and Ministry*, written with the purpose of sketching the common history of the churches concerned, reveal this Anglican bias as well.²⁰ It would have been better if those essays had been more carefully worked on in order to be written from a common perspective, and to establish and explain the method in the PCS. If that had been the case, much critique could have been avoided, or made more focused.

In the Porvoo debate, Roelvink criticised the PCS's use of history, and in particular its account of Reformation history, as too one-sided. Reformation history is positively emphasised as a renewal of church life; but the PCS is silent about the fact that the Reformation also "radically broke the *unity* of

¹⁶ See the historical essays in *Together in Mission and Ministry*; Montgomery, 'Jämförande sammanfattning', p170.

¹⁷ PCS Foreword, §9.

¹⁸ Halliburton, 'Orders and Ordination'.

¹⁹ See *Together in Mission and Ministry*, p59-154.

²⁰ Hill, 'Introduction'; Hill, 'Existing Agreements'; Halliburton, 'Orders and Ordination'.

the western Church”; and Roelvink added that “sometimes the essays go even further and give not only one-sided but even incorrect historical information, especially about the Danish development”.²¹ Roelvink does not give any examples of these errors in the PCS’s account of Danish Reformation history, but his critique is relevant in the case of how the Norwegian church history is described.²² Its description could be characterised as protestant romanticism, that pictures Reformation history as a spiritual success story, but is silent about the devastating cultural consequences of the Reformation process – the destruction of the monasteries, its crucial impact on education and health care, and the division of the once-united church. In summary, the crucial political dimension of the Reformation in the Porvoo churches could have been handled in a more balanced way in the historical descriptions in *Together in Mission and Ministry*.

To note that the use of history in the PCS could have been better worked through, and the method more explicitly described, does not mean that the basis for the method and for the Porvoo solution is destroyed. Still, the prerequisites and content of the method need to be investigated.

9.2. History as prerequisite for the method in the PCS

If the method is possible, the issues embraced by the broader ecclesiology – such as *successio doctrinae* and *successio manuum* – must necessarily relate to and complement each other in one way or another. If this is not the case, critics would be right to describe the PCS as ‘mere diplomacy’. But if the issues embraced by the ecclesiology in the PCS are both related and complementary, the question is what the relation between those looks like, and how a broader ecclesiology might embrace and resolve earlier divisive issues. The relation is found in the church’s history and through the *christological* and *pneumatological* methodological approach, referred to earlier,²³ of which the method in the PCS is an expression. The use of history in the PCS is clearly a part of the method; but since the PCS does not really describe its own method, it is not clearly anchored historically, even though the Porvoo solution is based on the common history of the Porvoo churches. The historical basis for the method, however, is broader than the history of the Porvoo churches; and it is the focus for the rest of this chapter.

Although it is a historical fact that the Reformation resulted in a devastating division of the western catholic church, it is also a fact that this division

²¹ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p253; See also; Wainwright, ‘Is Episcopal Succession a Matter of Dogma for Anglicans?’, p169f.

²² Lislérud, ‘Norway’, p93ff.

²³ Chapter 2.1. and 2.2.

was not the intention or the wish of the reformers.²⁴ Nevertheless, the reformers' critique of the 16th century church life resulted, for various reasons and not the least of them economic and political, in such a division and, in consequence, in denominational and national isolation, prestige, pride, and controversial theology for centuries to come. Although there were earlier exceptions,²⁵ not until the 20th century was the political and confessional isolation and controversy replaced by a more constructive ecumenical attitude and effort. Conflict has been replaced by communion.²⁶ Through this new attitude of the 20th century's ecumenical movement, it has been possible to evaluate the Reformation conflict in a new perspective, illuminated by new historical, exegetical, patristic, theological, and sociological knowledge, to which the theologians of the Reformation did not have access. It is also easier to be constructive when reason is not misled by angry emotions in situations of conflict. The many writings of Luther himself, as well as of other debaters from both sides, are excellent examples of the opposite. On the other hand, the ecumenists of today have to deal with more than four centuries of divided confessional traditions with their own particular emphases on the dogma of the Church, which have often been formulated as a result of conflict and in opposition to the other. Seen as a whole, the consequence of the Reformation was a loss for all the participating parties, since the imperative of the church's unity was lost. To say this is not to pass an adverse judgment on the parties in question at that time, but there is a need for the churches of today to recognise their own share of guilt for the division of the one western church. This is what has happened during the 20th century through the ecumenical movement, as formulated in, for example, the PCS,²⁷ *Unitatis Redintegratio*,²⁸ and *From Conflict to Communion*.²⁹

As historically conditioned human beings, we always act in relation to the factors that surround us in our specific context that is our acting space. This was by necessity also the case with the persons who acted in the various contexts of the time we today call the Reformation. The question is: What were those conditions that lay behind the Reformation and that formed its development? The Reformation cannot be understood if other aspects than just theology are not also considered: factors such as spirituality, the Conciliar Movement,³⁰ politics, economics, and the poor communications between northern and southern Europe at that time, as well as the new tools of communication such as the printing press and new linguistic and humanistic

²⁴ Cf. CA 28: "No teaching and no forms of devotion have been introduced among us that are contrary to the Scripture or the Catholic Church."

²⁵ See Chapters 2.2.1. and 2.2.2.

²⁶ Cf. LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*.

²⁷ PCS §22, 49.

²⁸ RCC, 'Unitatis Redintegratio', p508f, §7.

²⁹ LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*.

³⁰ Avis, *Beyond the Reformation?*

skills. At the same time, in the midst of all those factors, there were specific ecclesiological, theological and juridical issues that became the focus of the reformers' critique. It is a widespread ecumenical insight today that much of the critique of the reformers was justified, and that the medieval church needed to be corrected. In fact, a number of abuses in the western church were acknowledged by the Council of Trent, half of whose pronouncements are concerned with reform. To state that the wish for reformation was reasonable is not to say that the answers the Evangelic reformers formulated as alternatives were successful or well-founded in every respect; neither is it to say that the response of the Council of Trent was so. Crucial for the Reformation movement – or rather, movements – is its rootedness in the renaissance humanist movement. Both the role of the bible and the reformers' view of history have to be understood as part of the humanist movement.³¹ In consequence, the reformers regarded the early church as the golden age, as the ideal and model for the re-form of the medieval church. Today, with much greater exegetical and patristic knowledge, it might be asked to what extent the Evangelic reformers based their critique of Rome on patristic content – a question that so far has hardly been treated conclusively.³² In this perspective, the Reformation is an unfinished project, taken over by the political interests of princes and kings.

The Reformation deeply formed all the factions that emerged from the Reformation controversy and became independent churches. It was, however, a long process before the different factions had developed what we today might call a self-consciousness ecclesiological identity. Only later were they recognised as independent churches, as something other than mere factions in the one Church – as the Evangelic-Lutheran, Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Reformed churches we know today.³³ The first time that those factions were described as independent churches was as late as the 1630s.³⁴ During the 30 years war (1618-1648), the various armies were still referred to as different parties in the western church. An indication of the confusion in Europe of politics, religion, and economics during the 17th century is that one funder of the Swedish King Gustav Adolf II and the Swedish military campaign during the 30-years war, mainly in Germany, was the French RC Cardinal Richelieu of Paris. Cardinal Richelieu supported the Swedish King financially in order to weaken the Germans, at the same time that Gustav Adolf II, at least officially, fought for the true evangelic faith, and, of course, also for the maintenance of the Swedish Empire, which at that time not only

³¹ Kaufmann, *Geschichte der Reformation*, p107ff.

³² Rubensson, 'De ortodoxa kyrkorna', p71f; Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, p126.

³³ The radical Reformation and the Anabaptist movements compose a fifth Reformation tradition.

³⁴ Göransson, *Den Europeiska Konfessionspolitikens Upplösning 1654-1660*, p148ff.

included Sweden and Finland but also parts of the Baltic States and the so-called Swedish Pomerania in present-day Northern Germany and Poland.³⁵

With respect to the PCS's claim of a deeper understanding beyond the traditional concepts of the Porvoo churches, the conception described in the PCS is at a certain distance from the confessional perspectives of the churches as they were formulated in the heat of the Reformation controversies and later defined in the 19th century – what we might call the *gap*. Since all the Porvoo churches are historical churches and Reformation churches (cf. PCS §7), such an approach cannot be unusual. Rather, it follows from the essential nature of the Reformation that there should be the willingness to be re-formulated by a more authentic, more purified concept of the Church of Christ, and, as such, better to serve the purpose of the Church – i.e., to be an sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom of God.³⁶ The oft-stated *ecclesia semper reformanda* slogan, first formulated by Karl Barth in 1947,³⁷ means exactly this: the constant readiness for renewal and to be re-formulated, re-formed, into a more authentic church.³⁸

The question, of course, remains as to what this more authentic church is, which shows why the question of authority in the Reformation conflict was so decisive. For the Evangelic reformers the answer was found in the gospel and in the early church as alternatives to the existing church order; and this shows that the intention of their critique was not to modernise the church but to rediscover the ancient church.³⁹ If they had had the same exegetical and patristic knowledge that we have today, the alternatives they formulated might well have been different. The Evangelic reformers did not have the critical biblical scholarship that we take for granted today; nor did they have our historical knowledge of the second- and third-century church or of the emergence of patterns of ministry and ordination. If they had, they would probably have been better able to grasp the NT writings about those things.⁴⁰ Furthermore, their exegesis was coloured by their reactions to what they perceived to be abuses in the medieval church. Paul Bradshaw has noted that, considering the knowledge available to the reformers, they “are perhaps more to be applauded for how far they did succeed in understanding what the

³⁵ Sweden lost Estonia and the northern part of Latvia to Russia at the Treaty of Nystad in 1721, and Finland to Russia in 1809. A few years later, in 1815, Sweden left Swedish Pomerania.

³⁶ PCS §18.

³⁷ Mahlmann, ‘„Ecclesia semper reformanda“. Eine historische Aufarbeitung. Neue Bearbeitung’, 384ff.

³⁸ The necessary conversion of the churches to the unity given by Christ has been constantly emphasised in the ecumenical movement; see e.g. PCS §22, and USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, §109; RCC, ‘Unitatis Redintegratio’, p508, §7.

³⁹ E.g. Montgomery, ‘The Understanding of the Church’, p166.

⁴⁰ Bradshaw, ‘Preface’, pXX.

NT had to say than to be criticized for the ways in which they failed to grasp it properly.”⁴¹

Taken together, what I have described here means that we today, with more exegetical, patristic, historical and sociological knowledge, can find more profound answers to the questions of the Reformation controversies. So, far from the method of the PCS being an expression of relativism and syncretism, it mirrors an understanding of the division of the church, and of the independent denominations that emerged from the Reformation, as an interim stage that still awaits its resolution (cf. PCS §22, 54). The Anglican church historian Gillian Evans has described this:

Both methodologically and in terms of content then, the sixteenth-century debates must be seen as constituting only an interim stage and as making a contribution in a continuing process. But if the divisions of the sixteenth century were a *culpa*, it is possible to begin to see them as a *felix culpa*. They have shown up serious faults in the system as it was developing in the West in the later Middle Ages. They have been corrective. The Council of Trent was not able to make a statement with the reformers because the Church was divided and the division in its turn consisted in part in the inability of the Christian Western Europe to speak with a common mind at that time. Mutual misunderstanding had reached a point where the anathemas of the Council’s canon could only be directed as against enemies of the truth. After Trent the Roman Catholic Church could refer to a clear statement of its position on the controverted issues; by 1577 the Lutherans could point to their Formula of Concord, the Anglicans to the Thirty-Nine Articles, and so on. Attitudes became entrenched.⁴²

The description of the time since the Reformation as an interim stage is more than a description of its aftermath that is appropriate for ecumenical purposes. In 1548 Emperor Karl V saw it necessary to establish an interim pause in the ecclesial struggles before it was possible to establish unity.⁴³ The interim remained, however, as confirmed in the Peace of Augsburg in 1555 and in the Peace of Westphalia in 1648; and it led to that permanent confessional, organisational and national division with which Europe has lived ever since.

Since all the Reformation churches – Anglican, Lutheran, Roman Catholic and Reformed – were formed in opposition to one other, they have often developed a great sensitivity to one or more features in the life of the church that they have emphasised, at the expense of other dimensions of the church.⁴⁴ The method of the modern ecumenical movement, as represented by the PCS, has been to see those particular features of the churches as strengths, rather than as problems, which, when held together by a more biblical and patristic perspective, could help all the churches to become more

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Evans, *Problems of Authority*, p290f; Cf. e.g. Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p271.

⁴³ Kaufmann, *Geschichte der Reformation*, p685ff.

⁴⁴ Cf. Thunberg, ‘Om receptionen av ekumeniska texter’, p205.

authentic, in the sense of being more biblical and more whole.⁴⁵ Crucial to this inclusive method and the ecumenical movement itself is the ecumenical use of *koinonia*. Since this biblical term is common to all the denominations, *koinonia* has an ecumenical potential that does not privilege any one of them.⁴⁶ Unlike words that become identified with particular traditions – such as “‘confession’ with Lutheranism, ‘historic episcopate’ in Anglicanism, ‘sacramental’ in Roman Catholicism”⁴⁷ – the biblical word belongs to all. The ecumenical task is, in the words of Fuchs, “to receive this biblical image in such a way that the diversity within the Christian traditions may be reconciled in foundational church-*communio*”.⁴⁸ This is simultaneously related to an already growing *koinonia* within the Anglican Communion, the LWF, and the RCC, framing ecclesiology in terms of *communio*.⁴⁹ In this perspective, different confessional interpretations could be seen and employed as the contextual emphases of particular denominational features, which held together are important to all churches and crucial for a fully worked out understanding of ecclesiology, including apostolic succession. Ecumenical dialogue can be regarded, in the words of John Paul II, as an exchange of gifts.⁵⁰

A lack of historicity can be noted in the Porvoo debate, which stands in contrast to the emphasis of the PCS – as well as the identity of the churches themselves – that the churches involved are historical churches that “stand in continuity with the Church of the Patristic and medieval periods both directly and through the insights of the Reformation period”.⁵¹ The Christian Church did not emerge with the 19th century revival movements or with the Oxford Movement. But in the Porvoo debate, it was primarily the understandings of apostolic succession of those two periods that dominated the discussions, which simultaneously contradicted the aim of the PCS: to overcome those traditional approaches through a deeper understanding.⁵² The ecclesiology of the PCS embraces the narrower traditional ecclesiologies of the two traditions, and brings them together in a more authentically biblical and patristic ecclesiology.⁵³ It is for this biblical and patristic *koinonia* ecclesiology that we shall search in the continuing treatment of the result of the investigation in Part II.

⁴⁵ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p43; Quanbeck, ‘A Contemporary View on Apostolic Succession’, p180.

⁴⁶ This is also true for the Pentecostal movements; Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, p116ff.

⁴⁷ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p280.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p44.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, p44; cf. also PCS §60.

⁵⁰ John Paul II, ‘Dominum et vivificantem’. Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p307ff; USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p25f, §92–94.

⁵¹ PCS, §7.

⁵² PCS Foreword §9.

⁵³ E.g. Sykes, ‘The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS’, p93.

To have the intention is, of course, not the same as saying that the Porvoo delegates succeeded in establishing reliable answers to the dilemmas of the Reformation; but before we turn to that question, we shall investigate how the perception of ecclesiology and ordained ministry has changed through the course of history. It was due to this changed perception that there eventually evolved a growing need to correct the western church in the medieval period, the consequences of which we still live with, and which the ecumenical endeavours strive to overcome. It is this development that is the historic prerequisite for the *Porvoo method*.

9.3. The historical development of ecclesiology and ordained ministry

In many church history textbooks it is common to describe the theology of the early church, and of Augustine in particular, and then immediately to describe how the same issue was understood at the Reformation.⁵⁴ This approach witnesses to a part of the problem I intend to describe in this section. Considering the consequences of the Reformation era, such an approach is not surprising; but since the millennium between Augustine and the Reformation was not without changes in ecclesiology, this approach raises problems. Rather, the Reformation was caused by changes in the medieval church as compared with the early church; and through the clashes of the Reformation, medieval theology became constitutive of the churches that emerged from it and created an interim-stage in the western church.⁵⁵ In this section I intend to describe that history which later resulted in the many and various calls for reform and which compose the historical prerequisite for the method in the PCS. The intention is not to paint a full historical picture, but only to: (1) sketch the major lines of development in order to demonstrate how the Reformation clash was a result of a medieval fragmented ecclesiology and a changed understanding of ordained ministry in relation to those of the early church. That sketch is important in order to see the meaning of the method in the PCS, which aims to overcome the interim-stage caused by the Reformation clash and understand the Church in more biblical and patristic terms – in other words, a re-forming of the churches into visible unity in Christ. (2) The historical description will function as a background for my continuing investigation as I will relate to this history in my analysis of the critique of the PCS discerned in Part II. (3). The description of the historical and ecclesiological background to the Reformation and the various Refor-

⁵⁴ Cf. McGrath, *Christian Theology - An Introduction*.

⁵⁵ This history is of course described by many, e.g. Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*; Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*; Osborne, *Priesthood*; Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*; Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*; Nichols, *Holy Orders*.

mation churches functions also as a presentation of some important concepts that I will use throughout the thesis.

It is further important for the investigation to ask not only what sources we have about the growth of order and structure of the church, but also how this development is interpreted and evaluated. The question that divides the churches is not how and at what pace the structure and organisation of the church developed – i.e., the historical question – but whether this history and structure should be understood as divinely ordered – i.e., its theological significance.⁵⁶ I shall return to the question about the presence of the Holy Spirit in the institutional development of the Church in chapter 13. In the present chapter, the focus is on the historical development.

9.3.1. Ordained ministry in the two first centuries

The NT writings do not give us a precise description of the structure or institutional form of the church, and are not meant to do so; but they do indicate a complex development in the organisation of the church during the first two centuries among different local churches. This does not mean that there was an initial period when the Church did not have a leadership, which was a common interpretation among liberal protestant theologians early in the twentieth century.⁵⁷ There seems to be substantial consensus that such an interpretation must be judged non-historical.⁵⁸

Although there has always been some form of leadership in the church, there was not a simple historical succession from Jesus to the apostles to the bishops.⁵⁹ Rather, there was a gradual development and growth of the structure of the church and of institutionalisation. It is not realistic to think that it is possible to establish when and how the various stages of the development of the threefold ministry occurred. Rather, the development must be understood as a process of organic growth and evolution. The critical ecumenical question is whether this development could be understood as having happened under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, as stated by many churches.⁶⁰

The Gospels describe how Jesus chose and called twelve disciples, who had a special commission and were known as *apostoloi*. In the Pauline letters the titles *episkopos* and *diakonos*, still less *presbyteros* (not at all before the pastoral letters), are not much used, while ‘apostle’, ‘prophet’ and ‘teacher’ are.⁶¹ In Luke and Acts ‘apostle’ is used as the highest title of ministry.

⁵⁶ Cf. Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*, p100; Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, p4ff.

⁵⁷ More recently also RC theologians; e.g. Schüssler Fiorenza, *In Memory of Her*.

⁵⁸ O’Collins, ‘Did Apostolic Continuity Ever Start?’, p138ff.

⁵⁹ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p379.

⁶⁰ See, e.g., Raun Iversen, ‘Theological and Liturgical Considerations’, p561; Lehmann and Pannenberg, *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era*, p155; Petri, ‘CO 1571’, p160f.

⁶¹ I simply mention this complex question about the titles of the Christian minister; see further; Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle*, p571ff.

Those called *episkopoi* in the NT should not be understood as ‘bishops’ in the same sense as later in the church’s history. It is not clear how the different kinds of ministers were appointed. It is possible that *presbyteroi* were appointed by the apostles and the founders of the local churches (Acts 14:23), but the authors of the pastoral letters describe them as appointed by co-workers of the apostles, and it is uncertain whether Paul ordained those local leaders (cf. Acts 20:17-35). There is some evidence that the appointment of presbyters involved some ritual, including “laying hands on the head” (Acts 6:6, 1 Tim 5:22). It appears from the NT evidence during this period that the college of *presbyteroi-episkopoi* was responsible for the leadership, with no single person in charge except when the apostle or one of his co-workers was present (Acts 20:7-12). This demonstrates an important point about leadership in the early church, as indicated in the NT: the obvious authority of the apostles, in relation to both the local churches and the local college of *presbyteroi-episkopoi*.⁶²

From Scripture it is possible to discern two sorts of ordained ministry in the organisational development in the first century church. One was in the local churches, with a stable college of *presbyteroi-episkopoi*. The second was a group of apostles and their co-workers who functioned as missionaries. None of these were a ‘bishop’ in the way that Ignatius or Polycarp later were, nor was the liturgy of the ordination rite developed yet. Without indulging in an anachronistic reading, it is possible to recognise in those two modes of ministries the embryo of the later threefold ministry. In this development, two questions seem to be crucial. First, why did the ministry of the *presbyteroi-episkopos* become permanent in the Church, while other kinds of structure disappeared? And secondly, how did the two modes of ministry – the local and the apostles’ ministry – meet and merge into the threefold ministry? We do not know how this transformation into the mono-episcopacy of the second century happened. What we do know is that this transformation was fast, lasting ten to possibly fifty years, and taking no more than one hundred years.

Of special interest in this connection is James, brother of Jesus, who became the leader together with the presbyters of the important church of Jerusalem (Acts 21:18). Besides the presbyters, who may already have been there before James took over the leadership, there were also deacons. The triad of James-presbyters-deacons may have replaced the triad of the apostles-the presbyters-the deacons (cf. the formula ‘*oi apostoloi kai ‘oi presbyteroi*’ in Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22, 23 and 16:4). This may also have been the formative model for other churches that received the faith from the mother church in Jerusalem, and eventually became bishop-priest-deacon.⁶³

⁶² Roloff, ‘Church Leadership According to the NT’, p143.

⁶³ Ibid., p142f; Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church*, p64.

In the second century the organisation of the church became increasingly developed and consolidated. The literature outside the NT is very limited, and if ministry is treated at all, it is only in a secondary way. In the post-apostolic churches the development seems also to have occurred in parallel in different local churches, but in different ways and at a different pace. Thus different structures of orders existed in parallel. In the last decade of the first century, *I Clement* gives an account of a collegium of *episcopoi* and *presbyteroi* who, it seems, had not yet become distinct from one another in the churches of Rome and Corinth. According to the work of *The Shepherd of Hermas*, this presbyteral structure remained well into the second century. Like *I Clement*, *Didache* gives evidence of a recently-established local church, with a structure that is not yet developed but with a prominent role given to prophets – a ministry that *I Clement* does not mention. The differences between *I Clement* and *Didache* show that in the same period, local churches could be at different stages of development. *I Clement* tells us that the local leaders were appointed by the apostles.⁶⁴

The college of *presbyteroi-episkopoi* was also the ministerial model in Antioch during the last two decades of the first century. However, around 115,⁶⁵ Ignatius of Antioch describes a christologically motivated mono-episcopate ruling the local church, surrounded by an assisting presbyterate. A third kind of the ministry was the *diaconoi* who served in the community. The *ordo* described here was established in the south-west of Asia Minor (present-day Turkey). In the light of the textual evidence, it seems likely that the church in Antioch was led by a presbyterate for several decades before it developed into the mono-episcopate described by Ignatius. We do not know how established the mono-episcopate was in other parts of the church during this time (the second decade of the second century), but it is likely that Ignatius emphasised episcopacy as much as he did because it was still not unquestioned.⁶⁶ While *I Clement* emphasises the presbyter as the successors of the apostles, Ignatius does not maintain that the bishops receive their authority from Christ as successors to the apostles, but neither does he deny it. Ignatius sees the church as Christocentric. The *episcopos* is the presider over the community, and therefore he also leads its liturgical worship.⁶⁷

After 150, the one bishop surrounded by a *collegium* of presbyters had become the established model for the church's ministry. The role of the *presbyterium* was not liturgical but advisory. Sullivan has summarised the

⁶⁴ Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*, p81ff, 101f.; Dupuy, *Apostolic Succession*, 34:p81f; Hein and Jung, 'Bishop, Episcopate', p262.

⁶⁵ The literature differs on the year Ignatius wrote his letter. Sullivan claims 115, and Hein and Jung argue for 107. The differences are not that serious, since both dates affirm the ongoing development in the church from the college of *episcopos-presbyteroi* to the mono-episcopate. See Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*, p104, 125; Hein and Jung, 'Bishop, Episcopate', p262.

⁶⁶ E.g. Campbell, *The Elders*, p245.

⁶⁷ Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*, p103ff.

gradual development of the threefold ministry in a concise way that also includes the parallel development of the New Testament canon. Sullivan states that:

1. The post-NT development (in terms of ministerial orders) is consistent with the development that took place during the NT period.
2. The episcopate provided the instrument that the post-NT Church needed to maintain its unity and orthodoxy in the face of the dangers of schism and heresy threatening it.
3. The Christian faithful recognized the bishops as the successors to the apostles in teaching authority. The reception of the bishop's teaching as normative for faith is analogous to the reception of certain writings as normative for faith. The Holy Spirit guided the Church in determining both norms, for error about the norms would have led to untold errors in faith.⁶⁸

From about 200 a description of a ritual ordination is preserved in the *Apostolic Tradition* traditionally associated with *Hippolytus*.⁶⁹ It describes a threefold ministry with bishop, priest and deacon and includes an extended theological discussion on ordained ministry. At the end of this period, *priest*, *hiereus*, *sacerdos* and *pontifex* are used to refer to bishops and presbyters. This means that a more 'priestly' or cultic interpretation, like that in the Greek and Jewish worlds, entered the understanding of the church's ministry. Liturgy began now to become the basis for church leadership, rather than was the case earlier, when church leadership was the basis for liturgical leadership. This change would continue through the next millennium. At the turn of the third century, ministry in the church is still more than the threefold ministry, and there is a continued ministry of prophecy and teaching.⁷⁰

9.3.2. Clericalisation of ordained ministry (210 to 600 A.D.).

At the beginning of the third century, ordained ministry was understood primarily as communal and integrated with the eucharistic communion of the church. In the *Apostolic Tradition*, differences between bishop and priest were not clearly drawn, but there were important distinctions.⁷¹ Both bishop and priest are ordained to the ministry of *episcopé*. Both participate in the pastoral ministry of presiding, but it is the bishop who has the primary responsibility; priests assist and advise him, since the bishop is seen as the high priest in his assembly. The episcopal ministry was understood as the 'ministry of the Spirit', while priests could receive but not give the Spirit. In

⁶⁸ Ibid., p225ff; See also Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p377ff.

⁶⁹ Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition*. Both the year, its history and the author is discussed by present day scholars. See Bradshaw, *Reconstructing Early Christian Worship*, p48f.

⁷⁰ Osborne, *Priesthood*, p89ff; Marksches, 'Apostolizität und andere Amtsbegründungen', p319.

⁷¹ Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition*, p24ff, §2ff.

consequence the bishop is understood as the one who ordains. The bishop ordained new priests and deacons, but only neighbouring bishops participated in the laying on of hands for the ordination of the *episcopus electus*. The *Apostolic Tradition* expressly states that the presbyterate did not intervene at this moment. Immediately after the ordination, the priests gathered around the new bishop at the altar and concelebrated in silence while he alone said the *anaphora*, which at this time had not yet been formalised.⁷²

The priests were only indirectly qualified to celebrate the eucharist. The bishop and the priest formed a community college in the eucharist, along with the deacons in the ministry of the eucharistic community. The relationship of the bishop to the eucharistic communion was essential for the understanding of the bishop, and together they evoked the image of Christ surrounded by the Twelve in the midst of the gathered people.⁷³

Important for the relation between ecclesiology and ordained ministry is the understanding of ordination in the *Apostolic Tradition*, which is truly “ecclesial in its communal dimension; it is *liturgical*, because the ordination takes place during the liturgical assembly; and it is at the same time *juridical*, because the newly ordained assumes his concrete responsibility from the moment that he enters into the presbyterium”.⁷⁴ Through ordination the bishop entered into the college of bishops, signified by the presence and participation of neighbouring bishops in his ordination. The communion of the church was served by this collegiality, and was the expression of unanimity of faith and of sacramental communion made specific through the exchange of letters, visits, and so on.⁷⁵ The bishop was recognised as the true pastor of his people, and together the bishops were seen as the successors of the apostles.⁷⁶

The history of ecclesiology and ordained ministry from the third century onwards is characterised by continuing theologising about ordained ministry, in which the notion of *priest* (hierous) became dominant. As the church grew, the ministers became professionalised; and in contrast to earlier centuries, they received their income from the church. At the same time, the ministers were increasingly identified as ‘clergy’ as distinct from the laity, and the church was seen as those who served and those who received.⁷⁷ Georg Schöllgen has noted that the changes described here could have been motivated by social and historical conditions, but the theological justification for those changes was often one of the decisive reasons for the innovation.⁷⁸ In the process of theological reflection, ‘priesthood’ was developed, and seen

⁷² Ibid., p24ff, §§2–3.

⁷³ Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, I:p45, 47f, 72ff.

⁷⁴ Ibid., I:p46.

⁷⁵ Ibid., I:p80.

⁷⁶ Botte, ‘Collegiate Character of the Presbyterate and Episcopate’, p82f.

⁷⁷ Schöllgen, ‘From Monoepiscopate to Monarchical Episcopate’, p114ff, 127.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p123.

more in terms of the Aaronic and Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament.⁷⁹

Until the fourth century, the bishop was emphasised as the leader of the community, and as such he was the primary liturgical leader, and almost no sacramental liturgy was celebrated without him.⁸⁰ When the church developed and grew and became more than an urban phenomenon, the bishops' area of responsibility were enlarged, with the result that in practice it was the local priest – the parish priest – who was the shepherd, while the bishop was at a remove.⁸¹ When each bishop was responsible for many parishes, priests became responsible for the celebration of the eucharist, and the immediate relationship of the local parish was with its priests, not with its bishop. This changed the understanding of the presbyter and the bishop. As in the *Apostolic Tradition*, the bishop is still the focus of unity and exercises authority in the church, but the presbyter participates in certain tasks of the bishop. However, the role of conferring ordination is always reserved for the bishop.⁸²

When the bishop was increasingly understood as a liturgical leader, and because of that as the leader of the community – rather than the other way round – ordination was understood as a setting apart, which meant further clericalisation. This meant also a clericalisation of the presbyter and deacon, and the development of minor orders. Laity and clergy were divided both sociologically and theologically. From the fifth century the ordained minister began to wear special vestments outside of the liturgy, and from the sixth century celibacy was required in a more general way.⁸³ From the fourth century onwards the bishops were given more worldly responsibilities. As a result, the understanding of the office was increasingly individualised, and the understanding of the *communio* and of the collegial Church was weakened.

The changed understanding is demonstrated by the use of the notion of *priest/hiereus/sacerdos*. The title was originally used of Jesus' offering of himself to the Father on behalf of humankind. But since this offering was made present through the holy eucharist, and it was the bishop who made this offering, it did not take long before the title was transferred to the bishop in person.⁸⁴ Around the year 200, *sacerdos* is used for the first time to refer to the bishop, and continues to be so used from around 350 until 500. When the liturgical function is increasingly given to the presbyter during the fifth and sixth centuries, *sacerdos* is used for both bishop and priest from around

⁷⁹ Gy, 'Notes on the Early Terminology of Christian Priesthood', p106ff.

⁸⁰ Osborne, *Priesthood*, p154.

⁸¹ Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church*, p94ff.

⁸² Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p123ff; Osborne, *Priesthood*, p156f.

⁸³ Osborne, *Priesthood*, p148.

⁸⁴ Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church*, p201.

600 A.D. As we shall see, the change continued; and from the 11th century *sacerdos* normally referred to the priest.⁸⁵

9.3.3. Individualisation of ordained ministry (600 to 1000 A.D.).

Around the beginning of the seventh century, the bishops, both in the East and in the West, were seen as the successors of the Apostles and the centre of the church. In the West, however, a new approach gradually evolved with the increasing clericalisation and individualisation of ordained ministry and the changed ecclesiology.

In the Gallican ordination rite from the eighth century, the presbyter is identified as *priest* or *sacerdos*, distinct from the *episcopos*. It is primarily the presbyter who is identified as the celebrant of the eucharist in the service of the people, although he is still under the authority of the bishop. The “council of the presbyterium gathered around the bishop is no longer taken into consideration, while the idea of a priest as one set apart with manifestly superior moral qualities has gained ground”.⁸⁶ This changed understanding led to a diminishing of episcopacy, while the presbyteral office grew in importance. Increasingly the presbyter became responsible for the *munus triplex* (word, sacrament, and government) in the local parish, which made the bishop less visible. Simultaneously the division between the clergy and the faithful continued to grow.⁸⁷

From the end of the seventh century, the newly-established Frankish kingdom would contribute even more to this development. On a large scale at this time, ecclesiastical property came under the control of the secular lords, and was moved from episcopal control, which made the priest more independent of the bishop and more dependent on the land-owner. Ordination by the bishop was never disputed, but the election of the candidate for such priestly ordination was increasingly under the control of the lay land-owner.⁸⁸

During this period the papacy began to claim universal jurisdiction in a way it had not done before. The strengthening of the pope and of papal power in the eighth century further affected ordained ministry. The bishops were increasingly centred around the pope, and the earlier collegiality of the bishops lost its importance both theologically and practically. Due to the decline of the Roman Empire, since the fourth century the bishop had been given more and more worldly responsibilities, and from the seventh century the bishops more regularly came from noble families. Altogether it blurred the relation between the life of the local church and the bishop even more, and

⁸⁵ Gy, ‘Notes on the Early Terminology of Christian Priesthood’, p114ff.

⁸⁶ Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p150.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Osborne, *Priesthood*, p170f.

many came to see the bishop as a nobleman rather than as a minister of the church.⁸⁹

The development of the sacramental understanding strengthened the cultic focus on the priest, at the expense of the importance of the bishop. Due to the problem with the proprietary system in the Frankish kingdom, the clericalisation, individualisation and separation of ordained ministry, the loss of episcopal collegiality, the development of independent religious orders, and the rise of the universal papacy, it became more and more necessary for the western church to define the different spheres of power and jurisdiction.⁹⁰ The system of the proprietary church lasted into the twelfth century, when it was changed in the Gregorian reform. It was also in the eleventh century that many of those questions would find their answers in the new scholastic theology and the new canon law.

9.3.4. Ecclesiological fragmentation (from 1000 A.D.)

From the eleventh century the eucharistic, pneumatological and eschatological ecclesiology of the early church was largely forgotten,⁹¹ and the church came to be understood instead as a hierarchical structure that was explained in terms of a rationalistic and juridical approach through the new scholastic theology and the new canon law. The new scholastic method was no less than an intellectual revolution, with many blessings, even though its rationalistic approach meant a narrowing perspective on ecclesiology and ordained ministry. The concepts of ordained ministry, sacramental theology, and ecclesiology lying behind the medieval practices – against which the reformers later reacted – were developed by the major scholastics; Alexander of Hales, Thomas Aquinas, Bonaventure, Albert the Great, and John Duns Scotus. Their approach remained the standard approach in the western church, and would remain so beyond the Council of Trent in the RCC, from the thirteenth century to the middle of the twentieth century – a period of seven hundred years.⁹²

Like a lost ecological balance, this changed ecclesiology had consequences during the medieval period that we have not been able to comprehend until the modern period. In the early church, the minister was ordained in order to be the leader of the local church; and so he was also the one who presided at the eucharist. In the medieval period this notion was narrowed: the priest was ordained to be able to celebrate the eucharist. The medieval understanding of ordained ministry came to focus on this ability to consecrate the body and blood of Christ in the holy eucharist, and was not longer

⁸⁹ Ibid., p179ff.

⁹⁰ Kasper, *Theology and Church*, p122ff, 155; Osborne, *Priesthood*, p201; Daniel-Rops, *Cathedral and Crusade*, 3:p209ff, 213ff.

⁹¹ The expression is taken from Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p185.

⁹² Osborne, *Priesthood*, p161, 202ff.

understood in the context of the communion of the church, but as a *potestas* given in ordination to the office bearer as his personal possession.⁹³ This indicates a second change: since the focus was on the eucharist and on the ability to consecrate the elements, all other ministries in the church were related to priesthood as the highest rank of order, and episcopacy was no longer regarded as part of holy orders. The difference between priest and bishop came to be understood as more juridical than theological. From Peter Lombard in the twelfth century onwards, most scholastic theologians maintained that the sacrament of order did not include the bishop, only the priest and the deacon.⁹⁴ The change is summarised well by Osborne:

With the exclusion of episcopacy from priesthood, the collegial connection to Jesus and his apostles had to be found elsewhere, namely, in a dignity and an office, i.e. in administration or jurisdiction. ... [Concerning the power of the priest] to consecrate the bread and wine, only divine power was above him. There is a directness between Jesus and each priest; in the case of the episcopacy, the bishop as a priest was, of course, in similar directness to Jesus; but as bishop his office and dignity were not that clearly direct, and this opened the way to a different approach to collegiality, namely, one through jurisdiction which was conferred by the Pope. Scholastic theologians did not clearly see this displacement of the basis of collegiality, but from our present standpoint with the advantage of historical data in front of us, we are able to see that there was a clear connection between the exclusion of episcopacy from the sacrament of order and a decline in the appreciation of the collegiality of bishops.⁹⁵

Important for the changed conception was the new canon law of the early medieval period. From the eleventh century onwards, the development of jurisprudence was rapidly applied, using the new scholastic method, to canon law and the development of the new universities. The new church law made an important contribution to the changed ecclesiastical consciousness in the early medieval period and its relation to society. Canon law became an efficient tool in the struggle for the church's independence, for the understanding of the sacraments, including ordained ministry, and later on also for the rise of the national state.⁹⁶ The question of the independence of the church was closely linked to the investiture struggle and the need for the Gregorian reformers to define the different spheres of power. This effort was an important motivation for the development of a more elaborated definition of the sacraments, in which theology and law were closely connected and mutually dependent.⁹⁷ The new independence of the church of the early me-

⁹³ Cf. Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p169ff; Kasper, *Theology and Church*, p123, 155; Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, p57f.

⁹⁴ Osborne, *Priesthood*, p204.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p209f.

⁹⁶ Berman, *Law and Revolution*, p130.

⁹⁷ Rusch, 'Gregory VII', p472; Daniel-Rops, *Cathedral and Crusade*, 3:p209ff, 213ff.

dieval period was no less than a revolution.⁹⁸ The great focus on the question of validity since the medieval period is an expression of this increased judicial conception of the church.

The long historical development of the church resulted in the medieval period in an ecclesiology understood primarily in relation to Christ, but with a weak pneumatology.⁹⁹ In this ecclesiology the clerical institution, with the individualised ordained ministry as the possession of different powers, had largely replaced the understanding of the church as a *communio*. The relation to Christ was seen as that between an association and its founder. The founder bestowed his powers on the apostles, who passed them on to the hierarchy. Through this, the internal relations within the community were broken and a non-reciprocal relationship was developed like that between the governors and the governed, between teachers (*ecclesia docens*) and the taught (*ecclesia discens*). In consequence the hierarchy was identified with the church, and the balance between the different elements of the community was lost and compensated for through a developed jurisprudence. This imbalance affected all areas of church life: how the church was governed, the relation between the Pope and the bishops, between the bishop and his clergy, between the clergy and the people of God and between different jurisdictions of various orders and the hierarchy. The fundamental theological reason for this imbalance was the loss of the importance of the Holy Spirit for ecclesiology.¹⁰⁰

9.3.5. The Reformation and the positions since

In contrast to the medieval emphasis on priesthood as a *potestas* possessed by the individual office bearer, the Evangelic reformers came to emphasise the community and the ordained minister as servant.¹⁰¹ The presbyteral conception of ordained ministry was retained, however, and even cemented in many Evangelic churches. When the Council of Trent finally met (1545-1563), it came to lay the basis for the emerging RC ecclesiology and concept of ordained ministry. The intention of the council was not to present a complete expression of the faith, but merely to correct what in its view had been falsely denied by the Evangelic reformers. Its statements are therefore deliberately one-sided and only present counter-positions, and do not offer any statements on those matters where the council was at one with the Evangelic reformers. The statements of the council were further affected in that it based

⁹⁸ Berman, *Law and Revolution*, p110ff.

⁹⁹ E.g. Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p136.

¹⁰⁰ Legrand, 'The Revaluation of Local Churches', p59f.

¹⁰¹ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p466.

its anathemas on summaries of the writings of the reformers that were not always accurate.¹⁰²

Trent continued to regard priesthood as the seventh order, but it did also reform the leading position of the bishop in the church. In contrast with previous medieval councils, the decision-making at Trent was solely episcopal. Theologians took part as advisers, and national states influenced the discussions; but it was only the bishops who took part in the decisions. Trent emphasised the bishop as pastor and the episcopal duty to reside in his diocese, with important pastoral consequences. The council did make a clear distinction between priest and bishop, stating that:

Besides the other ecclesiastical grades, the bishops, who have succeeded the apostles, principally belong to this hierarchical order and have been, as the same apostle says, established by the Holy Spirit 'to govern the Church of God' [Acts 20:28 *Vulg.*]; that they are superior to priests, confer the sacraments of confirmation, ordain ministers of the Church, and can perform many other functions over which those of lower order have no power.¹⁰³

The distinction was a settlement with the one-sided juridical conception of ordained ministry and the understanding of ordained ministry in the emerging Evangelic churches. At the same time, and with a certain inconsistency, Trent did not elaborate episcopacy in collegial and sacramental perspectives. The council still focused on a priesthood that is given certain powers. Episcopal ordination was the solemn granting of wider responsibility and authority to a person who had already received the fullness of the sacrament of orders in priestly ordination. Episcopacy was not seen as a sacrament as such; the sacrament was the priesthood. In contrast, the reform of the English ordinal took place on the principle that episcopal ordination is as sacramental as that of a priest. In contrast with the Evangelic-Lutheran and RC presbyteral conceptions of ordained ministry, the sacramental understanding of episcopacy has been the common teaching of Anglican theologians.¹⁰⁴

The presbyterally-oriented concept of ordained ministry remained in the RCC until Vatican II and its return to patristic tradition.¹⁰⁵ The theology of ordained ministry in Vatican II, and in much contemporary theology, has not abandoned the medieval understanding, but it has broadened the understanding through the ecclesiological perspective of the early church. In many Evangelic churches the presbyteral conception of ordained ministry has re-

¹⁰² Lehmann and Pannenberg, *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era*, p21; Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, p60f. Cf. Nichols, *Holy Orders*, p99. "These articles, though they represent the views of no single Reformed figure, offer a fair overview of the positions bruited in dissident circles. The council, then, did not attack a straw man: it was familiar with the genuine opinions of its adversaries." This seems to be a more apologetic statement than a historically correct one. Cf. USA/LRCD, *Eucharist & Ministry*, p30, §51.

¹⁰³ DzH 1768.

¹⁰⁴ ARC/USA, 'Anglican Orders', p520, §10.

¹⁰⁵ RCC, 'Lumen Gentium', p28 §21, p38 §27; Francis, 'Sacramental Theology', p581.

mained as a heritage of the medieval period – although in the modern period it has been challenged by BEM's emphasis on the threefold ministry as normative for the one church. As we saw in the Danish Porvoo debate, the question about ordained ministry as one or three, presbyteral or episcopal, was prominent.

The fragmented medieval ecclesiology was not overcome by the Reformation, but it was petrified through the emergence of the four Reformation churches and their search for identity over against the others, and expressed through controversial theology. The polarised situation made the distance between the various churches even larger than it needed to be from a strictly doctrinal perspective.¹⁰⁶ The negative approach meant that the reformers' critique of medieval scholastic theology, in a reverse sense, came to be formative for the emerging RCC. This is true both for ecclesiology and ordained ministry. The teaching was spread not least through Bellarmine's Catechesis, and meant a further polarisation of the RCC and the emerging Evangelic churches, which on their side developed their confessional identity in opposition to the others.¹⁰⁷

The imbalance in the theology of power and authority in the medieval period affected the thinking of theologians on all sides in the sixteenth century debates.¹⁰⁸ RC ecclesiology was thus defined by the reformers' critique of the medieval imperial conception of the church. Likewise, the Evangelic movements were formed by their failure to reform the western church in opposition to the emerging RCC. The pre-Reformation conciliar movement had failed to restrain the power of the pope in order to reform the church.¹⁰⁹ The Reformation itself can be interpreted as a consequence of that failure, and as a distorted and fragmented form of conciliarism, partly secularised by placing councils under the authority of princes and denying them infallibility.¹¹⁰

Those questions have never been properly resolved, given that the churches have been isolated from one another for the greater part of the post-Reformation history, as national churches bound up with secular princes and states. Not until the breakthrough of the ecumenical movement and, later, the changed RC attitude towards other denominations, could the 'interim' stage of the Reformation be challenged through a new, more biblically and patristically motivated ecclesiology, including its conception of ordained ministry.

¹⁰⁶ Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p64.

¹⁰⁷ It is possible to describe this process as a mutual 'confessionalisation', cf. LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*, p17, §18.

¹⁰⁸ Evans, *Problems of Authority*, p225.

¹⁰⁹ Avis, *Beyond the Reformation?*, p107.

¹¹⁰ Avis, 'Ecclesiology', p129f.

9.4. Ordained ministry and ecclesial *communio*

The development described here is of great importance for the subject investigated. However, before turning in the next chapter to concrete questions about the PCS, it is important to discuss the relation between the changed ecclesiology and the split brought about by the Reformation, since it is this disunity that ecumenism strives to overcome through its “embracing” method and include the parts of the fragmented ecclesiology and bring them into an ecclesiological whole – i.e., an holistic ecclesiology.

What fundamentally happened at the Reformation was that the one western catholic church was divided into a number of parts (easily observable on a map of medieval Europe), which developed into the independent churches we know today. But what was the inner nature of this division? Or put differently: what really happened when the Church became divided? The question is not about the reasons for this division, but about its nature and how it affected the authenticity of the emerging churches. The question relates both to ecclesiology and to the theology of ordained ministry – not as they have often been treated, as two different things, but held together, because ordained ministry is an expression and a bond of ecclesial *communio*.¹¹¹ As we have seen in this chapter, in the fragmented and unbalanced ecclesiology in the medieval period, that connection had been reduced to a minimum; and in various ways this is how it remained in the post-Reformation churches, in contrast with the early church.

In the early church, the church was seen as a function of the Holy Spirit; but in the second millennium the Spirit tended to become a function of the church. This shift had a visible effect on the theology of the church, which came to be seen more or less as a political and juridical power structure. The Gospel and the Spirit tended to become possessions of the church, administered by the church.¹¹² This *possessive understanding* of church and ordained ministry was not, as in the early church, based on fraternity and communion, but on a theology of inalienable powers possessed by the individual office bearer. In a study of the process of admission to the ordained ministry,¹¹³ Puglisi has demonstrated that the connection between the church’s *communio* and ordination and ordained ministry was weakened, and even partly lost, due to the fragmented ecclesiology and the individualisation of ordained ministry.

With the disintegration of the ecclesiological processes of admission to ordained ministry (election, epiclesis, mission) in three distinct steps, their essence was lost; ordination as a process which was communal, liturgical and juridical was lost sight of. The liturgical aspect was emphasized to the point

¹¹¹ PCS §24.

¹¹² Edwards, ‘The Holy Spirit as the Gift’, p203; Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p247.

¹¹³ Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I-III.

of eclipsing the two other aspects; the communal dimension which was concerned with the entire Church assumed a reduced or nominal form, with the accent now put on the person, and vocation becoming the business of the individual, God and the bishop. Lastly, it was necessary to add jurisdiction, because ordination was no longer conceived of as the entrance into an office which concerned both the local and the entire Church. These shifts eventually reveal the underlying imbalance in the theological basis.¹¹⁴

The development also had consequences for the perception of the church's apostolicity and succession. In the early church the apostolicity of the church was understood as *substantive apostolicity*. I have not yet elaborated further on the content of this concept; I will do so in due course.¹¹⁵ For now, it is sufficient to note that historically *doctrine*, *order* and *canon* developed in parallel and as inter-related, from a greater plurality to a more defined content and, in the case of ordained ministry, the threefold ministry. All three were perceived as apostolic and as necessary expressions of the church's apostolicity and tradition. Apostolicity and its succession was not merely a question about doctrine or episcopal succession: in its substantive sense, apostolicity concerned the life of the whole church and its *traditio*, *successio* and *communio*.

In the second millennium, the ordained minister was not primarily understood in the ecclesiological context of *communio*, but as a person who through ordination had received a *potestas*; this narrowed and objectified the conception of apostolic succession and episcopacy. When the sacramental and mystical dimensions of the church were mainly lost, apostolic succession became instead a question about the power of valid office, ordination and the conducting of the sacraments and understood more in territorial-juridical than in ecclesiological-sacramental terms.

The question of apostolic succession was not much emphasised during the late medieval period. If it was treated, this occurred in the context of the ongoing discussion of conciliarism – i.e., the relation between the Pope and the college of bishops. In this context the question of apostolic succession was primarily related to the Petrine office and to the right relation with the pope.¹¹⁶ Since episcopacy and episcopal succession were not understood sacramentally, the concept of episcopacy changed from a teaching competence to a juridical competence, given on delegation from the pope. An example of this is when the Pope Paul IV denied the validity of the ordination of Matthew Parker in 1559, because the Anglican ordinal included an explicit denial of papal authority.¹¹⁷ In Trent, apostolic succession was touched

¹¹⁴ Ibid., I:p207.

¹¹⁵ See Chapter 15.

¹¹⁶ Smolinsky, 'Successio apostolica', p366f, 374f.

¹¹⁷ ARC/USA, 'Anglican Orders', p520, §10. There seems to be an uncertainty in the document about which pope, because Pope Paul IV died 18 August 1559 and was not succeeded

upon during the third session (1562-1563) in the discussion of the ordained ministry.¹¹⁸ It was understood that the apostles had received their power to ordain and their jurisdictional power directly from Christ, and not from Peter. Correspondingly, the bishops also received their power directly from Christ. However, in order to maintain Petrine primacy, the bishops were understood as legates of Christ and Peter. That would change only at Vatican II and its deepened conception of episcopacy.

Both the question about ordained ministry in relation to the *communio* of the church, and the question about apostolicity, consisting of the church's *traditio*, *successio* and *communio*, concern how the *local* and the *universal* dimensions of the church are related to each other. The consequence of the Reformation clash was that this relation was broken, and eventually independent churches emerged. In the ecclesiological *communio* perspective, the church is directed both *vertically* and *horizontally*: *vertically* between the church as a communion of believers and God, which is the salvific relation between God and the church as a communion; and *horizontally* as the church's *communio* is expressed between the local and the universal. What happened at the Reformation was that the salvific and vertical relation remained in the various parts of the one western catholic church, but the horizontal relation between local and universal was broken due to the new national churches and the division of the church.¹¹⁹

The rediscovery of the retained vertical and salvific relation of the various parts of the divided western catholic church, despite the lost horizontal relation within the one church, is one of the most important results of the ecumenical movement.¹²⁰ The nature of the division is related to fragmented ecclesiology and its difference from the sacramental ecclesiology of the early church. In a comment on the Reformation split, Puglisi has noted that there was a certain tendency of the Roman party

to overemphasize the hierarchical, placing the accent on the 'tradition' enacted by the imposition of hands by the bishops, and tending to ignore the 'communio' within the local Church by reducing its role in the choice of its bishop, is henceforth faced with the opposite tendency on the part of the Protestants, emphasizing the local or regional 'communio' at the expense of the 'tradition'.¹²¹

by Pius IV until 25 December the same year, while Archbishop Parker was elected 1 August 1559 but not ordained until 19 December 1559.

¹¹⁸ DzH 1763-1778.

¹¹⁹ Tillard, *Church of Churches*, p43; Holze, 'The Ecclesiology of the PCS', p99; Tjørhom, 'The Church and Its Apostolicity', p199; Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p32ff.

¹²⁰ Cf. USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p26ff, §95ff.

¹²¹ Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p188.

This chapter has described the historical background to why the Reformation conflict could be seen as an interim stage that we today, with greater knowledge, can move beyond. That history is the reason that the Porvoo method could achieve its aim of embracing the separate parts of the fragmented ecclesiology and bring them into an ecclesiological whole. While this is stated in general, the method must be applied to specific issues; and this will be done through the continuing investigation of the arguments used in the Porvoo debate for or against the PCS, as discerned in Part II. The first question concerns the church's visibility or invisibility, which was the basis of much of the ELCD's criticism of the PCS. This question, in turn, is of crucial importance for how unity and communion are understood.

10. Church as visible or invisible

In Chapter Five it was established that the main issue behind the negative Danish evaluation of the PCS was the question about the church's visibility. According to the general Danish approach, the church is primarily invisible; and so, in the ELCD's discussion, there was a severe critique of the emphasis in the PCS on the visibility of the church and its unity. The Danish ecclesiological approach is based on a minimalist reading of the *satis est* in CA 7, identifying the unity of the church with the Gospel and the sacraments, but excluding order. In line with this understanding, the ELCD declared that "signing the Porvoo Declaration is not a precondition for full church fellowship".¹ Unity was understood as a spiritual, non-material confederation of parishes, and to some extent of dioceses; ecumenism was understood as co-operation; and structure and organisation were understood as non-theological factors, with consequences for the understanding of church law. The ecclesiology in Denmark has been described as "Christianity without a church".² The Danish concept of unity is contradictory, because the unity defined as 'spiritual and invisible' is perceived as an invisible unity of visible parts – i.e., of parishes and dioceses. Such a description is not found in the Danish ecclesiological discussion, but taken as a whole this contradiction is a consequence. With reference to Schlink, in Chapter Five I labelled the Protestant tendency to separate between inner and outer, material and spiritual, and to exclude ordained ministry from the things necessary for unity, as 'ecclesiological docetism'.³ In the Danish Porvoo debate this ecclesiology was often defined as 'Lutheran', in contrast to the PCS, which was defined as 'non-Lutheran'.

The reason for Danish and Protestant unease about including ordained ministry in the *satis est* is the wish to safeguard the Church against a *possessive* understanding of ecclesiology and ordained ministry. Such a recognition would mean that the celestial and eschatological reality of the church, i.e. the church's invisible aspect, is too much identified with the church's terrestrial, visible and material dimension. This is important, because it means that the Protestant emphasis on the Church's invisibility is a valuable corrective to a

¹ ELCD, CIR, 'Response to the Anglican Churches in the Porvoo Communion', p1; Cf. also Widmann, 'Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen', p120.

² Raun Iversen, 'Den kirkeløse kristendom i Danmark', p13ff. Chapter 5.1.

³ E.g. chapter 5.4.7.

one-sided identification of the eschatological reality with the earthly church. At the same time, Protestant ecclesiology risks becoming one-sided if it loses touch with the materiality of the church's corporate dimension.

Since 'Christianity without a church' was determinative for the Danish Porvoo debate, I shall analyse this ecclesiology from different perspectives. The first is whether the emphasis in the PCS on the church's visibility is in contrast or in harmony with Lutheran ecclesiological reflection and the historical background to 'churchless Christianity' in Denmark. Then I turn to its content, which at its core is about the interpretation of *satis est* in CA 7 and about how soteriology and ecclesiology relate to each other. Furthermore, this issue is related to an ecclesiology of fundamentals as held by Dalferth.⁴

10.1. Visible or invisible church?

Despite the Danish emphasis on the church's invisibility,⁵ it contrasts with the ecclesiological understanding of the WCC and the LWF. At New Delhi in 1961, the WCC stated that the unity now hidden in Jesus Christ must be visible in every place through all Christians being led by the Holy Spirit into a fully-committed unity; and that this has not happened must be regarded as an expression of a lack of faith and as resistance to the working of the Holy Spirit.⁶ Likewise, several LWF dialogue documents establish that the Church and the Church's unity are visible. The *Pullach Report* (1972) states that the Lutheran and Anglican "traditions agree that the *unity* of the church, God's gift and our task, must be manifested in a visible way".⁷ Like the PCS, the LRCJC document *Ways to Community* (1980) understands the church's unity to be *visible, diverse and dynamic*,⁸ and in *Church and Justification* (1993) the same dialogue states that:

[Roman] Catholics and Lutherans are in agreement that the saving activity of the triune God calls and sanctifies believers through audible and visible means of grace which are mediated in an audible and visible ecclesial community. They also agree that in this world the salvation-community of Christ is hidden, because as a spiritual work of God it is unrecognizable by earthly standards, and because sin, which is also present in the church, makes ascertaining its membership uncertain.⁹

⁴ See Chapter 6.2.3.

⁵ E.g. Grane, 'Porvoo-erklæringen', p47. See quote by Grane in chapter 5.4.3.

⁶ WCC, *The New Delhi Report*, p116, §2.

⁷ ALIC, 'Pullach', p30, §53.

⁸ LRCJC, 'Ways to Community', p221, §33. See also Chapter 2.5.6.

⁹ LRCJC, 'Church and Justification', p522, §147.

The description of the Church as invisible is not found in Holy Scripture. Jesus refers to the Kingdom of God as “not of this world”,¹⁰ but the same is not said of the Church.¹¹ Nor was the Church understood as invisible by the church fathers of the first three centuries: they reflected on the Church as an empirical and visible society.¹² There are traces of speculation in the early church about the Church as pre-existent,¹³ which would be fully developed in Valentinian Gnosticism, not in the Church.¹⁴ The distinction between Church as invisible and visible is present in the thoughts of Augustine.¹⁵ It is a distinction, not a separation, made to explain the church as an invisible spiritual community and as the more ambivalent worldly conglomeration of saints and sinners (*ecclesia mixta*).

In the sixteenth century the Evangelic reformers referred to this distinction in their critique of the papal church, and emphasised that the church’s external form does not rest upon the legally-constructed powers of popes, bishops or their courts.¹⁶ This was also the case with Luther. In his early writings especially, he referred to the Church as an invisible spiritual community in his critique of the medieval western church with its institutionalised understanding and identification of the church with the hierarchy.¹⁷ The Reformation conflict was not about this distinction, which was not in dispute, but about how the outer visible church and its unity would be understood. At its core there were questions about authority, and the role of primacy, and the hierarchical institution.¹⁸

The reason that the distinction between the invisible and visible aspects of the church was elaborated as a separation in much Protestant ecclesiology – expressed as the dichotomy between the church of Jesus Christ and its institutional embodiment – has to be found elsewhere than in the theology of the Lutheran confessions;¹⁹ and that is in the search to find a balance between the authority of the church and that of the secular realm. This search, and the answer formulated in the notion of invisibility, are heirs to the lively pre-Reformation and Reformation debate about authority and to whom it primarily belongs: the papacy or the council – or, as later formulated in the Reformation movement, the Gospel – and the balance and relation between them.²⁰ The authority discussion continued in all the emerging post-Reformation

¹⁰ John 18.36. Cf. also John 6.15.

¹¹ See e.g. John 17:11, Mt 16.18, Acts 9.31, 1 Cor 10.32, Rom 16.5, 16.23, 1 Pet 2.5-10.

¹² Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p191.

¹³ McGuckin, ‘Origin of Alexandria’, p211ff.

¹⁴ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p191.

¹⁵ Evans, ‘The Church in the Early Christian Centuries’, p31 with reference to Augustine’s *The City of God*.

¹⁶ Ocker, ‘Religious Controversy of the Sixteenth Century’, p66f.

¹⁷ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p107f.

¹⁸ See further Avis, *Beyond the Reformation?*, p20ff.

¹⁹ Cf. LRCJC, ‘Church and Justification’, p520, §138. The CA “by no means describes the church as an invisible entity.”

²⁰ Avis, *Beyond the Reformation?*, p22ff.

churches as a question about how the relation between church and ruler should be defined and about the extent of the king's right in the church.²¹ In the turmoil of the Reformation the national state and the kings came to replace the authority of the pope in those areas that became Evangelic. Thus the Evangelic churches in Germany and Denmark, and to a lesser degree in Eastern Scandinavia, substituted one institution for another, leading to church division and the loss of independence as a result. Rather than finding evangelic freedom, those churches became part of state ideology and were used to support the emergent national states.

The reference to the Church as an invisible spiritual community was also aimed, as emphasised in CA 28, to restore episcopacy as a truly pastoral office that was distinguished from temporal rule. Still, most Evangelic reformers could tolerate the on-going position of bishops in the diets of the Holy Roman Empire, in the parliaments of England, Sweden and Denmark, where the bishops remained highly influential, not only in church but also in society.²² Rather than the intended separation between temporal and ecclesial power, as described in CA 28, there eventually evolved, to lesser or greater degrees, a separation of invisible and visible church, inner and outer church, true and false church. It is an historical irony that the captivity described by Luther in *De Captivitate* would be exchanged for an even greater captivity of the national church provinces to the national states and their princes and kings.²³

The state church system was not exclusive to the Evangelic and Anglican countries: it was also the case with Roman rulers and areas, according to the principle of the *Religious Peace of Augsburg* 1555 – *cuius regio, eius religio*. Nevertheless, those churches remained more independent through their relation with the papacy, to which the preserved episcopal order contributed.²⁴ In this respect, it is of interest to note that in both Sweden and England theologians argued for the preservation of episcopal order as a gift of the Holy Spirit and as a means for the church's freedom.²⁵ Consequently there were attempts in those countries to replace the episcopal order, but without success. Still, the non-Roman Reformation churches became closely tied to the interests of the secular rulers. No matter whether the rule was monarchical or later through liberalism and parliamentarism, the national churches became subordinate to the national authorities according to the

²¹ E.g. Ocker, 'Religious Controversy of the Sixteenth Century', p74.

²² Ibid., p67, 70; CA 28,19 "Where bishops possess secular authority and the sword, they possess them not as bishops by divine right but by human, imperial right, given by Roman emperors and kings for the administration of their lands".

²³ For a description of this history and how it gradually secularised Western society; Gregory, *The Unintended Reformation*, particular chapter three 'Controlling the Churches'.

²⁴ Ocker, 'Religious Controversy of the Sixteenth Century', p74.

²⁵ Brodd, 'Den helige Andes gåva', p127.; Norris Jr., 'Episcopacy', p342f.

principle *ius in sacra et ius circa sacra*. In practice the principle was realised in different ways in the various national churches.

The Reformation in Denmark was consolidated in 1537 when Bugenhagen crowned King Christian III and his Queen, ordained seven superintendents for the seven medieval dioceses, and published a new Church Ordinance.²⁶ The church became an integral part of the national state. The Danish Church Ordinance, confirmed in the Danish autocracy of the seventeenth century, did not grant the church any independence. It was the King who established all laws regulating the religious life of the people. According to the Danish law about the King passed on 14th November 1665, the King is obliged to honour, serve and worship the only true God as revealed in Scripture and as defined in the CA.²⁷ Otherwise the King was the highest authority in the church. The sovereign power of the King in ecclesial matters was formulated thus in the Danish law of 1683: “there is no particular church law [*kirkeret*], just as there is neither any independent church”.²⁸ The *ius circa sacra* meant that the Danish King had exclusive power and control over the clergy; and the result was that *ius in sacra* was understood as a purely spiritualised power for the clergy to preach, administer the sacraments, and hold the power of the keys. The implicit ecclesiology of the Danish law is thus a church that is identified with those functions that the clergy exercise; but it is not possible to speak of the Danish church as an independent entity. The institution of the church belonged to the King, and later to the secular state and the parliament as heirs of the King’s power. In consequence, the bishops and priests became officials of the King and state.²⁹ There is only one church law in Denmark: the Danish state’s legal regulation of church matters – unlike in Germany, where there is a difference between *Staatskirchenrecht* (the state’s legal regulations about the churches) and *Kirchenrecht* (the church’s legal regulations concerning its own matters).

The intention of the new Danish constitution in 1849 was to give the church independence in its internal affairs through the establishment of a church constitution. However, that has never been accomplished; in practice the pre-constitutional and autocratic situation has prevailed for the ELCD. In such a system, as the Danish Porvoo debate and the present Danish church law exemplify, the church structure and episcopacy cannot be emphasised without threatening the authority of the state’s interest – with consequences for ecclesiology. While this is the background, it is not the only reason why docetic ecclesiology developed in Denmark to such an extent. The fifth chapter described other important sources of the so-called *Christianity without a church* in Denmark, such as the 19th century revival movements, the

²⁶ Hendel, ‘Johannes Bugenhagen’, p59ff.

²⁷ Aagaard, *Identifikation af kirken*, p96.

²⁸ ‘Der findes ikke nogen speciel kirkeret, ligesom der heller eksisterer nogen selvstændig kirke’. Quoted from; Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid., p93ff.

‘free-congregations’ (*frimenighed*) and the Grundtvigian movement in the ELCD.³⁰ According to those movements, Christianity is primarily seen as individualistic piety and the church is understood in line with the minimalist understanding of CA 7. The common priesthood and CA 7’s proclamation of word and administration of the sacraments are emphasised, but in an individualistic sense and without reference to ordained ministry.

It is no coincidence that the minimalist interpretation of CA 7, and the ecclesiology arising from it, emerged in the state church system. This system provided a very different hermeneutical context from the original context of the CA, written in 1530 in the undivided western catholic church. The original intention of the CA was to give expression to the catholic faith of the one church (CA 28). But it was not written as a confession to separate one church from another, which is how it came to be interpreted during the nineteenth century.³¹ This understanding, along with other confessions, was only gradually established, with the CA as a fundamental doctrinal standard of the Lutheran churches. It was only in the confessional theology of the nineteenth century that the concept of a new type of church developed in a systematic way – i.e., the confessional church, in which the confession of faith assumes the function of the fundamental status of the church. This means that the role of the CA became very different from that originally intended in the sixteenth century, with crucial consequences for its interpretation; and this gave birth to what we today know as Lutheranism, along with other -isms, such as Catholicism, Anglicanism, Protestantism, Marxism, Socialism, Liberalism etc. All of these were born in the nineteenth century and gave rise to confessionalism composing of carefully defined confessions mutually excluding each other.³² The search for certain fundamentals or essentials of the church was part of this mentality since that which, according to this way of reasoning, belonged to the essentials of one confession, could not be part of another.³³

A contributing factor to this development was the new historical critical method in the nineteenth century, through which theology entered an authority crisis about the reliability of the sources and the foundations of Christian history. While the RCC met this by withdrawing from contemporary society and developing its own *societas perfecta*,³⁴ Protestantism, as a reaction, moved into individualism, seeing faith as an inner experience in either a pietistic or a liberal cultural version. Pietism and liberal theology could be

³⁰ It has been stated that the liturgical and ecclesiological understanding of Grundtvig is much more patristic and catholic than is often claimed in those movements in Denmark. See Bendixen, *Det lille Himmerige*.

³¹ Maffei, *Il ministero nella Chiesa*, p251ff.

³² Cf. Holte, *Die Vermittlungstheologie*, p150ff.

³³ Brodd, ‘Evangelisk katolicitet I’, p133ff. The PCS aims to overcome confessionalism through its deeper understanding. See further Chapter 16.2.6.

³⁴ E.g. Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p64f.

seen as two sides of the same coin: modernity.³⁵ In either case there was little room for descriptions of the church as a social and corporate entity; and the unity of the church, which was still confessed, was understood primarily in eschatological terms. In order to understand better the basis of this disembodied ecclesiology, we now turn to the relation of *satis est* in CA 7 to ordained ministry.

10.2. *Confessio Augustana* 7 and ordained ministry

At the centre of the Danish Porvoo debate, as in the German and American Lutheran responses, is the question about how CA 7 should be interpreted.³⁶ Should it be read in a minimalist sense, or should ordained ministry be understood as a prerequisite for, and integral to, the *satis est*? According to the latter understanding, ordained ministry is part of what CA 7 says is necessary for agreement about the unity of the church; while, according to a minimalist understanding, ordained ministry belongs to the human traditions or customs that do not necessarily have to be the same everywhere. These two approaches can also be described as the perceptions of the PCS over against Leuenberg,³⁷ or as the differences between the CoE and the EKD as formulated in Meissen.³⁸

In a lecture at the *Second Theological Conference* under the Meissen Agreement, Dalferth stated that, for the Protestant side, the requirements of CA 7 are a sufficient basis “to enter into full church fellowship unreservedly and without qualifications”.³⁹ In hermeneutical perspective it may be asked how anything can be read “without qualifications” – a question confirmed by the way that Dalferth’s argument continues. His statement is followed by an immediate qualification of CA 7 and of church fellowship, revealing an ecclesiology of fundamentals – i.e., “the proclamation through word and sacrament”.⁴⁰ According to this view, “questions such as those about the Church” and ordained ministry are functionally subordinate to “the fundamental features which are church-constituting”.⁴¹

³⁵ Cf. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p147ff; Pannenberg, *Christian Spirituality and Sacramental Community*. The non-corporate ecclesiology continues in the modern individualistic ‘Christianity’ or spirituality that states: “I am Christian in my own way” without any relationship with a church community, preaching or sacrament – in contrast with the message of Jesus.

³⁶ Several Danish debaters noted that this was the main question. Busch Nielsen, ‘Embede og kirke’, p108; Widmann, ‘Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen’, p122.

³⁷ Repo, ‘Apostolic Faith and Episcopal Ministry’, p38, note 21.

³⁸ EKD/CoE, ‘Meissen’, p138, §16.

³⁹ Dalferth, ‘Ministry and the Office of Bishop’, p10. See chapter 6.2.3.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p11.

⁴¹ Ibid.

According to Dalferth, ecclesiology is based on the *satis est* in CA 7, which sets out the constitutive fundamentals for ecclesiology. Harding Meyer has noted that, even though this interpretation of CA 7 has been commonly expressed, it “cannot be the last word”.⁴² In contrast, the original intention of the CA was not to constitute a new church, but to correct some errors in the one church,⁴³ as an ecumenical expression of the catholic faith (CA 28). The seventh article needs to be interpreted together with the eighth article, which complements CA 7 by stating that in the church, false and godly Christians are mingled together, although the sacraments remain efficacious even when administered by evil people. As noted earlier in Section 10.1, this is Augustinian ecclesiology; and the distinction between visible and invisible is intended to explain the church’s nature as a mixed society of saints and sinners, but not to deny the visibility of the church. The Roman *Confutatio* refused to accept CA 7 if its *assembly of saints* meant that false Christians were excluded from the church,⁴⁴ to which Melanchthon answered in *Apology* 7-8 that CA 8 is added exactly to avoid such an interpretation. In fact, originally the seventh and eight articles formed a single homogenous article on ‘the Church’; but this article was divided up and given the numbers seven and eight by the confutators in the *Confutatio*.⁴⁵ In his *Apology* Melanchthon followed this numbering, although he treated the two articles together.

The need to interpret CA 7 in the light of the whole CA is clear through a comparison of the description of the church in the creeds and in CA 7. Unlike the marks of the Church in the creed, the CA 7 considers only the church’s *unity* and *holiness*, but it does not discuss the church’s *catholicity* and *apostolicity*.⁴⁶ This limited perspective in CA 7 shows that it is not possible to base a whole ecclesiology on CA 7 without any further qualifications. That is confirmed by the development of the Leuenberg Fellowship, which has advanced the minimalist ecclesiology of fundamentals.⁴⁷ In contrast with the minimalist interpretation, ordained ministry is – as several debaters in Denmark emphasised⁴⁸ – one of Luther’s *notae ecclesiae*.⁴⁹

According to the Lutheran confessions, the true church is hidden under the church in its outward sense; however, the distinction between visible and invisible church is not used. Although the true church is hidden, it is not invisible or unreal and, in the words of the *Apology*, it should not be under-

⁴² Meyer, “‘Fundamental Consensus’ – A Governing Concept”, p67.

⁴³ E.g. Meyer, ‘Simul satis et non simul satis est’, p65.; Persenius, ‘Critical Questions from a Nordic Perspective’, p103.

⁴⁴ Eck, *The Confutatio Pontificia*, To article VII.

⁴⁵ Schäfer, ‘Communion in Lutheran Ecclesiology’, p134ff.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p137.

⁴⁷ Leuenberger Kirchengemeinschaft, ‘Die Kirche Jesu Christi’.

⁴⁸ Lodberg, ‘Udtalelse til biskopperne ang. Porvoo-erklæringen’, p79; Jørgensen, ‘Responsum Om Fællesudtalelsen Fra Porvoo’, p6.

⁴⁹ Luther, ‘Von Konziliis und Kirchen (1539)’, p632ff.

stood as a “Platonic republic”.⁵⁰ Given that CA 5 establishes that ordained ministry is instituted by God, it cannot be regarded as only *human traditions* that do not need (*nec necesse est*) to be agreed about,⁵¹ but as a constitutive element of the Church. CA 5 refers to the existing church order of priests and bishops in the one western catholic church, which means that this ministry is implied in the preaching and administration of the sacraments described in CA 7.⁵² CA 28 establishes that the bishop leads the Church *de jure divino*, and that eternal things as “eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit and eternal life ... cannot be obtained except through the office of preaching and through the administration of the holy sacraments”.⁵³ The ecclesiology spelt out in the confessions is a community of persons, as a spiritual reality, not as an outward, juridical and hierarchical body, but in which its visible and institutional elements of preaching, sacraments and ordained ministry are means through which the triune God is actively present.⁵⁴

The sacramental *communio* ecclesiology in the PCS is fully compatible with this understanding,⁵⁵ and represents in a better way the ecclesiology of CA than the Protestant position.⁵⁶ In fact, as Dalferth sought, the PCS describes ordained ministry as “functionally subordinated” to the Gospel and the sacraments. This does not mean that ordained ministry is not constitutive of the church,⁵⁷ but it is understood as a *ministry* in, for, and of the church, and thus as subordinate to the Word and Sacrament:

Into this life of communion with God and with one another (*koinonia*), we are summoned by the gospel. In baptism the Holy Spirit unites us with Christ in his death and resurrection (Rom. 6: 1-11; I Cor. 12: 13); in the eucharist we are nourished and sustained as members of the one Body by participation in the body and blood of Christ (I Cor. 10: 16f). The Church and the gospel are thus necessarily related to each other. Faith in Jesus, the Christ, as the foundation of the reign of God arises out of the visible and audible proclamation of the gospel in word and sacraments. And there is no proclamation of the word and sacraments without a community and its ministry. Thus, the communion of the Church is constituted by the proclamation of the word and

⁵⁰ Melancthon, ‘Apology of Confessio Augustana’, p178.

⁵¹ Meyer, ‘Simul satis et non simul satis est’, p72ff.

⁵² Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p383.

⁵³ CA 28.21 and CA 28.9; see further Chapter 13.3. See also CA 28.20-21 which states that “according to the Gospel or, as they say, by divine right, there belongs to the bishops as bishops, (that is, to those to whom has been committed the ministry of the Word and the Sacraments): no jurisdiction except to forgive sins, to judge doctrine, to reject doctrines contrary to the Gospel, and to exclude from the communion of the Church wicked men, whose wickedness is known, and this without human force, simply by the Word. Herein the congregations of necessity and by divine right must obey them, according to Luke 10:16: “Whoever listens to you listens to me”. But when they teach or ordain anything against the Gospel, then the congregations have a commandment of God prohibiting obedience, Matt. 7:15.”

⁵⁴ Gassmann and Hendrix, *Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, p138.

⁵⁵ Cf. Holze, *The Church as Communion*.

⁵⁶ Cf. Aagaard, ‘Porvoo’, p41.

⁵⁷ Cf. Meyer, ‘Simul satis et non simul satis est’, p75f.

the celebration of the sacraments, served by the ordained ministry. Through these gifts God creates and maintains the Church and gives birth daily to faith, love and new life.⁵⁸

According to the PCS, there is no doubt that the focus for the life and communion of the church is the proclaimed Gospel and the sacraments. However, the proclaimed Gospel and the celebrated sacraments demand necessarily that there are both a community and an ordained ministry.

In line with the PCS – and in contrast with the minimalist interpretation – both the Lutheran-Roman Catholic and the Anglican-Lutheran dialogues state that the doctrine of the church and of the ordained ministry cannot be separated from each other. The dialogues interpret CA 7 in the context of the whole CA, and not as an isolated emphasis of the *satis est*. The *Malta Report* establishes that ordained ministry is not something extra added to the saving work of Christ in the church, but that “the ministry of reconciliation belongs to the work of reconciliation. In other words the witness of the gospel requires that there be witnesses.”⁵⁹ The USA/LRCD states that Roman Catholics and Lutherans affirm together:

That the ministry of an ordained pastor or priest is a constitutive element of the koinonia of salvation gathered around font, pulpit, and altar. Central to this ministry is preaching the gospel, presiding in the sacramental life of the community, and leading as pastor the community in its life and mission. The activities of this minister are instruments of the life of the congregation as a koinonia of salvation.”⁶⁰

In *Ministry in the Church* it is stated that, in the Lutheran understanding, ordained ministry “serves the unity of the church and is one of its fundamental marks”.⁶¹ The document comments that ordained ministry is included in the two marks and, with reference to CA 5 and 28, that “the *satis est* is not intended to suggest that the church ministry is superfluous for unity, because it has been instituted by God with the task of preaching and administering the sacraments”,⁶² and:

The Lutheran *satis est* is, therefore, not contrary to the desire for the ‘fullness’ of church life, but actually opens up the way to this fullness. One must ask, in other words, what form of church structure most effectively helps the proclamation of the gospel and the life and mission of the church. The *satis est* understood in this sense frees Lutherans to face up to the call for communion with the historic episcopate.⁶³

⁵⁸ PCS §17.

⁵⁹ LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p179, §48.

⁶⁰ USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p16, §60.

⁶¹ LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p257f, §29–31.

⁶² Ibid., p272f, §80 note 110, with reference to CA5 and 28.

⁶³ Ibid., p273, §80.

The search for the fullness of the church is also the perspective of sacramental ecclesiology in the PCS that distinguishes it from earlier Lutheran and Anglican ecclesiological approaches.⁶⁴

Behind the minimalist interpretation of the CA 7 is the Reformation critique of an institutionalised understanding of the church and of grace as possessed by the hierarchy. This was the problem when ordained ministry was individualised and understood primarily as an ordained person's possession of a certain *potestas*. While the strength of the Protestant unease about including ordained ministry in the *satis est* is its wish to safeguard the church against a *possessive* understanding of ecclesiology and ordained ministry; its weakness is that this ecclesiology is exegetically, historically, and theologically problematic, and in practice becomes docetic. In contrast, the PCS follows BEM and denies a possessive understanding of ordained ministry through its emphasis on ordained ministry in episcopal succession as *a sign, though not a guarantee* of the apostolicity of the church. I will come back to this important notion in Chapter 12.

The PCS, as well as contemporary ecclesiology, opposes a possessive approach through its sacramental ecclesiology,⁶⁵ which requires the search for and the openness to receiving the fullness of the church. Through this ecclesiology it is constantly emphasised that the church, in the words of the PCS, "is always called to repentance, reform and renewal, and has constantly to depend on God's mercy and forgiveness",⁶⁶ since the church always depends on the gift of communion that comes, solely and exclusively, "from the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit".⁶⁷ The sacramental perspective contains a very different ecclesiological approach from the medieval legally-formulated ecclesiology and office, and points to the constant reliance on the grace given by God that is received by the church, but not possessed.

In contrast with the *Protestant position* that emphasises the invisibility of the church, the PCS understands the church as a *communio* revealing the community of the Trinity and thus ultimately an eschatological reality.⁶⁸ In the sacramental community of the church, there is a diversity of expressions given in and by the Holy Spirit, and held together in the unity of the church by bonds of communion. The term *bonds* is used four times in the PCS in relation to the visible unity of the church.⁶⁹ The PCS describes the visibility and unity of the church in biblical and concrete terms:

⁶⁴ PCS §54. See also Sykes, 'The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS', p93.

⁶⁵ Cf. BEM, E§29, BEM M§15.

⁶⁶ PCS §20.

⁶⁷ PCS §21.

⁶⁸ PCS §27. See also Thurian, 'The Lima Document – The Event and Its Consequences'. He describes the biblical foundation of the ecclesiology of BEM.

⁶⁹ See PCS §7, 20, 24.

§25 In the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles this sharing in a common life is served by the apostolic ministry. We are given a picture of how this ministry fosters the richness of diversity while also maintaining unity. Through the mission of the apostles Peter and Paul, the Gentiles also are baptized. In the face of the threat of division, this radical decision is ratified by the coming together of the Church in council (Acts 15). Here is illustrated the role of apostolic leaders and their place within councils of the Church.

§26 Such an understanding of communion has been described in the following terms: ‘The unity of the Church given in Christ and rooted in the Triune God is realized in our unity in the proclaimed word, the sacraments and the ministry instituted by God and conferred through ordination. It is lived both in the unity of faith to which we jointly witness, and which together we confess and teach, and in the unity of hope and love which leads us to unite in fully committed fellowship. Unity needs a visible outward form which is able to encompass the element of inner differentiation and spiritual diversity as well as the element of historical change and development. This is the unity of a fellowship which covers all times and places and is summoned to witness and serve the world.’⁷⁰

The PCS adds, rather modestly, that the “expressions of communion may need to be embodied in the law and regulations of the church”.⁷¹ Such a relation between ecclesiology and order, theology and canon law was severely criticised in the Danish Porvoo debate, and was understood as a confusion of soteriology and ecclesiology.

10.3. Soteriology and ecclesiology

An important ecclesiological feature in Denmark is that, based on the minimalist interpretation of CA 7, ‘church’ is seen more as something that *happens* than as something that *is*. This perception is a consequence of the relation between church and state in Denmark, since all the institutional features of the church were taken over by the state and the church was identified with the functions of the clergy, understood as the *satis est* of CA 7. In a settlement with this interpretation of CA 7, Aagaard emphasises that CA 7 speaks about the church as visible, not about an invisible heavenly entity. According to Aagaard, a consequence of the minimalist interpretation is that the visible church as *congregatio sanctorum* and as a concrete institutionalised community vanishes, and ecclesiology becomes identical with justification and the moment when it is distributed,⁷² i.e., the church *happens* rather than it *is*. This means, as Aagaard describes it, that the two marks of *satis est* are functionalised and changed to soteriology. This is contrary to the intention of CA 7, which is about ecclesiology.

⁷⁰ PCS §25-26 with quote from LRCJC, ‘Facing Unity’, p444, §3.

⁷¹ PCS §28.

⁷² Aagaard, *Identifikation af kirken*, p23ff.

In the Porvoo debate one critique of the PCS was that it made ecclesiology too important, risking its confusion with soteriology. In the words of Peder Nørgaard-Højen, already quoted in Chapter Five:

Some Lutheran churches remain deficient churches from an Anglican perspective because they do not have the historic episcopate, and they will only become churches in a true sense if they reintroduce it. If this interpretation is correct, the situation from a Lutheran perspective is serious, since that will imply that something (i.e., episcopal succession) is made necessary to be church, yet is not necessary for salvation.⁷³

At this point I will only consider the relation between ecclesiology and soteriology; in due course I will come back to the issue of episcopal succession.

The problem with the minimalist interpretation is that soteriology and ecclesiology are individualised, and in consequence there is a confusion of soteriology with ecclesiology while, although related, they are two distinct things. This means that ecclesiology becomes soteriology, which then is only about that aspect of salvation that concerns the liberation of the human being from sinfulness. According to such an individualised soteriology, there cannot, and should not, be added to the church anything that is not necessary for the salvation of the individual. In consequence it means that only that which is necessary for the salvation of an individual is necessary for ecclesiology.

The problem with this understanding is that both soteriology and ecclesiology become one-dimensional. This is because ecclesiology in practice only concerns individuals and how the individual receives salvation – i.e., soteriology. However, the biblical and patristic notions of both soteriology and ecclesiology, as well as the perspective in the PCS, are in fact much richer. Soteriology concerns not only the individual human being but also the whole creation, its fulfilment and reconciliation with the Triune God (Eph. 1:10, cf. 2:14). The Church, as the people of God, the Body of Christ, and the Temple of the Spirit (all describing a community), is sent as an effective sign into the midst of the world (PCS §18).⁷⁴ In that sense ecclesiology always concerns soteriology; but they must not be confused.

The *communio* of the church, or in the words of CA 7, *congregatio sanctorum*, is not something extra that is added as a bonus to the salvific moment of proclamation and the celebration of the sacraments. *Communio* is part of the salvific reality of the church as an eschatological, anticipatory and visible reality and sign in the world. The unity and community of the church, which makes the church both visible and effective, concerns soteriology as its instrument, but is not identical to it. Therefore, there might be ordinances, such as bonds of communion, that are necessary for ecclesiology, that strictly

⁷³ Nørgaard-Højen, 'Porvoo-Erklæringens forståelse af det historiske episkopat', p88; see also Widmann, 'Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen', 118f.

⁷⁴ Cf. USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p31, §119. In a discussion of the Petrine office, the USA/LRCD offers a similar description of soteriology and ecclesiology.

speaking are not necessary for the salvation of the individual, but that are necessary for the salvific efficiency of the church in the world.⁷⁵

The change of *communio sanctorum* in the Apostles' Creed to *congregatio sanctorum* in CA 7 was no invention of the reformers, but it was already present among scholastic theologians.⁷⁶ The change was not made to alter the term's content. *Communio* was identified with the *ecclesia* and the congregation, and *sanctorum* with the believers. *Congregatio sanctorum* was used as a way to make the church concrete and to identify the church of the Creed with the actual local community.⁷⁷ The change of terminology witnesses further to the importance of structure in the church, which in this period was not included in the content of *communio* and was understood in contrast to an abstract idealistic or platonic conception of the church.⁷⁸

The multi-dimensional conceptions of soteriology and ecclesiology are described in the PCS. Its approach also makes a clear distinction between ecclesiology and the Kingdom of God. The church is thus seen as an instrument and a foretaste of the Kingdom of God, not identical to it, and identified with the salvific intention of God.⁷⁹ In contrast, the minimalist interpretation of CA 7 has difficulties in distinguishing between the Kingdom of God and the reality and meaning of the church.⁸⁰ This follows from the confusion of ecclesiology and soteriology, and in consequence the unity of the church is interpreted as exclusively eschatological, and it becomes invisible. As a consequence of a more elaborated understanding during the 20th century of the church as sacramental sign and *sacramentum mundi*, it has been easier to distinguish between the Church and the Kingdom of God.⁸¹ This is important for the perception of the Church as both a human and a divine reality.⁸² For if the Church is both human and divine, the question is how those two relates to each other. As noted in this chapter the description of the church as invisible has been one way to offer a solution on that dilemma, which, however, has to been judged as too one-sided and not in accordance with the CA or the wider ecumenical movement. The PCS keeps the human and divine together in a sacramental understanding of the church and sees the episcopal ministry as a sacramental sign, that, however, "does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of the church to every aspect of the apostolic

⁷⁵ Still, cf. earlier quotations from CA 28 in Chapter 10.2 about the relation between ordained ministry, the episcopal ministry and the gifts of eternal things.

⁷⁶ Meyer and Schütte, 'Die Auffassung von Kirche im Augsburgischen Bekenntnis', p179; Junttila, *Congregatio sanctorum*.

⁷⁷ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p99; Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p110ff.

⁷⁸ Meyer and Schütte, 'Die Auffassung von Kirche im Augsburgischen Bekenntnis', p178ff.

⁷⁹ PCS §18.

⁸⁰ Grane, *Confessio Augustana*, p69ff comment to CA 7.

⁸¹ For a description of how the relation of the Church and the Kingdom of God has been elaborated through history, see Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p33ff.

⁸² PCS §20.

faith, life and mission”.⁸³ The sacramental understanding was a much debated issue in parts of the Porvoo debate and will be in focus for the next chapter, while the concepts of sign and guarantee will be scrutinised in Chapter 12.

⁸³ PCS §51.

11. Ordination and ordained ministry: Sacramental or not?

The question of the sacramentality or otherwise of the church, of ordained ministry, and of ordination is a good example of the gap between ecumenical theology and the Porvoo debate, referred to in the introduction to Part III. In an article in 2000, Cardinal Kasper notes that the ecumenical documents *The Spiritual Office in the Church* (1981),¹ and *BEM* (1982) “show that the question of the sacramentality of office is no longer a controversial issue; on this point there has been remarkable convergence. Rather, as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger has said, it is apostolic succession in the office of bishop that is ‘the central question in the [Roman] Catholic-Reformation dispute’.”² Although this might be true at the level of those documents, the concept of ordained ministry was understood differently in parts of the Porvoo debate.

In the Porvoo debate, ordination was referred to without really discussing the issue. This is striking, since the main question in the Porvoo debate, although approached from various angles, was the question about the validity of episcopal orders outside of the strict line of episcopal succession. Due to this lack, in combination with what was already noted in Chapter Two – that the PCS sees episcopacy and ordination as sacramental signs – there is a need to investigate what the PCS means by this. That ordination in the PCS is perceived sacramentally means that it is an effective sign, that it effects something. This ‘something’ has been described in the western tradition through the concept of *character indelebilis*. Strongly criticised by Evangelic reformers, *character indelebilis* was defended by the Council of Trent.

The issue of ordination understood as a sacramental sign will be investigated in three steps. First I elaborate how ordination can be perceived in different ways and what role ordination has in the PCS. Secondly, I discuss the much criticised understanding of ordination understood sacramentally and how that is an area in theology that has developed, as noted by Kasper above. Thirdly, I investigate what it means to state that ordination is a sacramental sign that effects something and how this relate to the concept of *character indelebilis*.

¹ Kasper refers here to the LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’ with a literal translation of the German title, *Das geistliches Amt in der Kirche*.

² Kasper, ‘Apostolic Succession in the Office of Bishop’, p203.

11.1. The understanding of ordination in the PCS

PCS §40 states that “the ordained ministry has a particular responsibility for witnessing to this [apostolic] tradition and for proclaiming it afresh with authority in every generation”.³ The concept *ordained ministry* is used to distinguish ordained ministry from other, non-ordained ministries in the church. In order to say something about the ordained ministry in a particular church, it is possible to investigate the ordination to this ministry, since it is through this liturgical act we call ‘ordination’ that a person becomes a member of a certain church’s ordained ministry. An ordination is in this sense to be regarded as a transformative act, through which a person becomes something that this person was not before. This is true whether this liturgical act is understood in sacramental or in functional categories, whether ordination is seen as an effective act that changes something or is seen as confirmation of an already-given task that is recognised and made public through ordination.⁴

The functional view of ordination is typical of 19th century pietistic theology, and has influenced much Protestant discussion of ministry and ordination. A difference between the sacramental and the functional views is that the former understands ordination as the transference of a lifelong ministry, while the latter does not necessarily do so. Secondly, it is possible to understand ordained ministry more-or-less in the same way and regarding its function and role in the life of the church, without necessarily valuing ordination in the same way.⁵ However, such a difference is not without importance for the understanding of church, ministry, and inter-church relations. The analysis of the role and understanding of ordination is crucial in the process of overcoming the unsolved problems of ministry between the churches; and it has often been a neglected issue in earlier ecumenical discussions.⁶ For example, one of the main RC critiques of ‘Ministry’ in BEM is its lack of discussion of the meaning of ordination, since this is important for the understanding of ministry and the role of episcopal succession.⁷ In the Porvoo debate there was confusion about the role and understanding of ordination, with consequences for the debate and the process.

This confusion was obvious when the official English text of the PCS was translated into the different languages of the churches, and it became clear that it was not self-evident how *ordination* and *consecration* should be translated. The use of different concepts in the different churches is a factor that should not be underestimated, since those divergences can sometimes even

³ PCS §40.

⁴ Cf. Raun Iversen, ‘Theological and Liturgical Considerations’, p563f.

⁵ Cf. Raun Iversen, ‘Purpose, Background and Methodological Issues’, p15ff; Tjørhom, ‘Ecumenical Research on Ministry and Ordination’, p477.

⁶ Cf. Raun Iversen, ‘Purpose, Background and Methodological Issues’, p15ff; Tjørhom, ‘Ecumenical Research on Ministry and Ordination’, p477.

⁷ In Thurian, *Churches Respond to BEM*, 1986, VI:p33.

be detrimental to a common understanding of ordained ministry.⁸ In contrast with the praxis in some of the Porvoo Churches,⁹ the PCS uses the term *ordination* exclusively in relation to the threefold ministry of episcopacy, presbyterate, and diaconate and it is not used in relation to any other kind of ministries in the church.

In the PCS, *consecration* is used synonymously with *ordination*. The word *consecration* occurs six times in the text, and in every case it refers to episcopacy. In four of those, the word stands for itself, and in the first two of those it is synonymous with the word *ordination* (§34 and §47). Four of those six occasions are in paragraphs 47, 48, 49 and 50, which particularly deal with the meaning of ordination or consecration to the episcopate. The fifth occasion is in §56, which summarises the agreement's results before the common declaration. In §34 the word *consecration* is used in relation to the ordination or consecration of bishops or superintendents in the 16th century, which was, however, conducted by presbyters. Overall, this means that in the PCS the term *consecration* is used when a bishop or superintendent is ordained, whether it is conducted episcopally (i.e., normally) or presbyterally, as happened occasionally in the 16th century.

The use of the term *consecration* reveals an interesting lingering over an older medieval terminology, which in itself represents the presbyteral concept of ordained ministry in the medieval period. It was only in the early medieval period, when the concept of ordained ministry had changed and was understood presbyterally, and bishops had ceased to constitute an *ordo*, that the normal terminology described a bishop as being consecrated, not ordained.¹⁰ It seems that, when the Porvoo Conversations used *consecration*, they were not fully aware of its terminological background – but followed common Anglican usage – which stands in contrast with the consequent description in the PCS of a ministerial conception of ordained ministry. Ideally, in order to show a developed understanding of episcopal ministry, the Conversations should have used *ordination* right through the document.

Since ordination as a liturgical act is, as stated above, transformative, it is possible to analyse the content of ordained ministry through an analysis of the ordination rite. This does not mean that a church's ordination rite says everything a church has to say about ordained ministry; but through an analysis of the rite, it is possible to discern a certain understanding of ordained ministry, both as formulated in the rite and in the importance the Church places on this rite and event. In the Lutheran-Anglican dialogues it has been a common pattern to treat ordination on the assumption that the churches involved basically agree in their understanding.¹¹ The PCS follows this pat-

⁸ Raun Iversen, 'Purpose, Background and Methodological Issues', p24.

⁹ This is true for the Church of Norway. The ELCD ordains only to episcopacy and priesthood, see *Ibid.*, p23; Tjørhom, 'Ecumenical Research on Ministry and Ordination', p485ff.

¹⁰ Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p186.

¹¹ Tjørhom, 'Ecumenical Research on Ministry and Ordination', p482, see also note 6 and 7.

tern in the statement, but it is complemented by the treatment of ordination in the essays.¹² The PCS does not describe any particular rite of ordination; instead, the Porvoo churches' actual rites of ordination are examined in two essays in *Together in Mission and Ministry*.¹³ In one of those, Halliburton analyses the ordination rites of the Porvoo Churches, and states that there is "so much in common between Anglican and Lutheran understandings of episcopacy that we ought to be sharing more fully in one another's ecclesial and ministerial life".¹⁴ Since no particular ordination rite is highlighted in the PCS, no analysis of an ordination rite is possible, but ordination and its content is nevertheless important in the agreement. The focus here is not on the form, nor on the content, of a particular rite of ordination, but on how the concept of 'ordination' is understood in the PCS.

Crucial to the Porvoo understanding of ordination is that ordained ministry can only be understood in and for the Church (§5, 17, 32j, 38), which as a whole is understood as a *divine reality* (§20). This is important for the understanding of ordination, since it is seen as an expression of this *divine reality* of the Church. According to the PCS the Church "sets apart" (§24) "a person" (§41) or "the ministry" (§24) for a lifelong ministry in and for the church, which is done in confidence that the Holy Spirit will be poured out upon the ordinand, confirming his natural gifts and completing them through grace. This is conducted through the laying on of hands in combination with prayer and the invocation of the Holy Spirit. According to the PCS, ordination *confers* (§26) the office instituted by God (§26, 32j, 48) as a gift to his Church (§17, 20, 26, 32j, 48) and transmits personal authority to the ordained in accordance with God's will and institution (§48). In setting apart the ministry through ordination, the unity of the Church is "manifested as a community of love",¹⁵ which is made concrete in §48 in these terms:

the participation of a group of bishops in the laying on of hands signifies their and their churches' acceptance of the new bishop and so of the catholicity of the churches, and through this it transmits ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God's will and institution.¹⁶

Ordination is further understood as manifesting the Church as a community of love and of the ordained as united in one single ministry (§24); and as such, ordination and ordained ministry are expressions of the catholicity and apostolicity of the whole church.

¹² For an analysis of the form and content of ordination in the Nordic countries, see the massive volume of Raun Iversen, *Rites of Ordination and Commitment*.

¹³ Halliburton, 'Orders and Ordination'; Porvoo Conversations, 'Rites of Ordination to the Episcopate'.

¹⁴ Halliburton, 'Orders and Ordination', p164.

¹⁵ PCS §24.

¹⁶ PCS §48.

11.2. Sacrament and sacramentality

As noted in Chapter Two, the PCS does not use the words ‘sacrament’ or ‘sacramental’ in connection with ordination and ordained ministry. The word appeared in an earlier draft of the statement, but was removed in the final version. That the term is not used does not change the content of the sacramental understanding in the PCS. The sacramental understanding of the church and ordained ministry is described instead through the concepts *instrument* and *effective sign*. The word *instrument* is used six times in the PCS:¹⁷ five times as part of a description of the meaning of the church, and on one occasion as a description of ordained ministry. In relation to the church, *instrument* is used three times together with *sign*, and in all five cases the description is of the Church as a *sacramentum mundi*, as in §18, which states that “the Church is sent into the world as a sign, instrument and foretaste of a reality which comes from beyond history - the Kingdom of God”. The sacramental reality of the Church is expressed concretely through ordained ministry, which is said to be “given by God as instruments of his grace and as possessing not only the inward call of the Spirit, but also Christ’s commission through his Body, the Church”.¹⁸

The instrumental or sacramental perception of ordained ministry is further described as an effective sign: §48 of the PCS states that “in the consecration of a bishop the sign is effective in four ways” and that, among others, it signifies the unity of the Church and “transmits ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God’s will and institution”.¹⁹ To say that ordination is an effective sign is the same as saying that it is understood sacramentally, since it is understood to be effective and gives grace through the material sign.

In the Danish Porvoo debate, many criticised the sacramental-sounding language in the PCS, and argued that ordination is not a sacrament. This was one reason that the PCS was adjudged to be non-Lutheran and alien to the ELCD. However, in general it was not stated what ordination is if it is not a sacrament; and the ordination practice of the ELCD does not exclude a sacramental understanding (as described in Chapter 5.5.4, about the Danish Porvoo debate).²⁰ Considering that Melancthon in *Apology* 13 states that the concept *sacrament* is applicable both to the ordained ministry and to ordination, the Danish hesitation about and critique of the sacramental understanding in the PCS appears exaggerated.²¹

¹⁷ PCS §18 (twice), 22, 32f, 58A(iv) and 61.

¹⁸ PCS §58A(iv). This phrase deliberately follows the wording of Lambeth Conference, ‘Resolution 9, ‘Appeal to All Christian People’, 1920’.

¹⁹ PCS §48.

²⁰ See also Raun Iversen, ‘Teologiske og juridiske mellemværender’, p122ff.

²¹ *Apology* art. 13. Cf. Piepkorn, ‘The Sacred Ministry and Holy Ordination’, p112.

While this conclusion is already true at the level of confessional understanding, the PCS represents a developed sacramental understanding. This was, for the most part, not considered, and only occasionally referred to in the Danish Porvoo debate, and consequently was negatively evaluated. In the medieval period theologians from both the Roman and the Evangelic parties defined a sacrament as ‘a sacred sign’, instituted by Christ, to give grace. The debate was about the extension of the definition, and the difference over the number of sacraments is primarily nominal, which the Apology of the CA clearly demonstrates.²² The Evangelics found support for baptism and eucharist as the principal sacraments in the NT, but also describes confession, ordination and marriage as minor sacraments;²³ the Romans, while emphasising the two main sacraments, were able to find biblical support for the seven sacraments in one way or another.²⁴

Parallel to the development of a new ecclesiology in the twentieth century, sacramental thinking has deepened beyond the earlier definitions, and identifies Jesus as the primordial sacrament, the Church as the basic sacrament, or the root-sacrament, and the sacraments as signs of the basic sacramentality of the Church.²⁵ Modern sacramental theology could not be contained within the framework of fragmented medieval ecclesiology, but it is not totally absent. In line with Augustine, in *De Captivitate* Luther stated that the term *sacrament* should be reserved for Christ and the sacraments, which he named ‘sacramental signs’.²⁶

In contemporary sacramental theology there is a parallel between the move away from a merely juridical language to a more sacramental language, along with the general theological move away from timeless and eternal expressions of truth to a more historical enterprise, including so-called institutional and social history. Sacramental language, which identifies the Church as a sacrament, is not only a corrective to the functional or symbolic understanding of baptism, eucharist and ordination. It is also a corrective to the objectification of sacramental acts, which regards ordination, or baptism or the eucharist, as a sacrament ‘in itself’, by virtue of possessing the norms and marks of objective validity.²⁷ It is the Church, as a community given by the Holy Spirit, that is the judge, not only of formal validity, but of the sacramental, charismatic, living reality of the sacramental mysteries. I will come back to this in Chapters 14 and 15.

²² The Apology never defines the number of sacraments, other than that it, like the RC tradition, emphasises that baptism and eucharist shall be regarded as the two principal sacraments; The Apology of the CA, article no. 13.

²³ The Apology of the CA, article no. 13.

²⁴ E.g. Osborne, *Priesthood*, p239.

²⁵ E.g. LRCDS, *Kyrkan som sakrament*; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p38ff; Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p79ff.

²⁶ Luther, ‘De captivitate ecclesiae babylonica (1521)’, p562ff.

²⁷ Bobrinskoy, ‘How Can We Arrive’, p66; Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p247.

This new sacramental theology has contributed to overcoming earlier common Lutheran resistance to sacramental language.²⁸ Today it is not applicable to regard *sacrament* as a divisive issue between Roman Catholic and Lutheran/Anglican ecclesiologies. In the LRCJC document *The Ministry in the Church*, it is noted, under the heading “Sacramental Nature of Ordination”, that both traditions are open to a sacramental understanding and that “for both [Roman] Catholics and Lutherans it is incompatible with this understanding of ordination to see ordination merely as a mode or manner of ecclesiastical appointment or installation in office”.²⁹

It is not surprising that the Danish public reacted against the sacramental language about Church and ordained ministry, since this language, so far, is mostly used in academic circles. The protest did not come from the Danish hierarchy either. More surprisingly, those Danish academics who took part in the debate did not manage to embrace the development of sacramental theology in a better way, but raised their protest against it based on more traditional sacramental concepts. Pedersen, Aagaard and Lodberg were exceptions to this; so too was Gregersen, although he protested against it. As a theologian deeply involved in the work of *Faith & Order* for many years, Aagaard saw past a repetitive approach and accepted developed sacramental theology.

In the Porvoo debate Tjørhom and Root gave expression to this ecumenical understanding, and explained that the PCS takes an intermediate sacramental position between the ontological and functional understandings of ordination and ordained ministry. The language used here is not precise, and it must be asked how words like ‘ontological’, ‘sacramental’ and ‘functional’ should be understood in relation to ordination in the PCS. Or, put differently: if ordination is an effective sign, what does it effect? According to the PCS, ordination in episcopal succession transmits ministerial office; but in what way is this more than a functional authorisation of the new ordained minister? And if it is sacramental, what is the difference between a sacramental and an ontological understanding? The question of the effect of ordination relates historically in the western tradition to the teaching about the concept of *character indelebilis*.

11.3. The effect of ordination: Character indelebilis

Since the Reformation, the question whether ordination effects an indelible character in the ordained has been one of the more controversial questions. The precise meaning of the concept was much discussed even before the

²⁸ The common Lutheran resistance shall not be made absolute, see e.g. Brodd, ‘The Church as Sacrament in the Writings of Yngve Brilioth’.

²⁹ LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p259, §33.

Reformation. There is no reference to *character indelebilis* in the PCS, but since the debate about this concept has influenced the understanding of ordained ministry and ordination since the Reformation, and is crucial to the sacramental discussion and the notion of validity, there is reason to investigate its content in order to see what the PCS means by ordination as ‘an effective sign’. *Character indelebilis* was not used in the Porvoo debate either, but it was implicitly present, given that the question about a sacramental understanding of Church and ordained ministry was such an important part of the discussion about apostolicity and succession, and determined how the PCS was evaluated. I will examine the meaning of *character indelebilis* as a way to investigate what the sacramental sign effects, and to discern the meaning of the concepts *ontological*, *functional* and *sacramental*. Contrary to the ecumenical agreement of the Anglican, Lutheran and RC traditions on *character indelebilis*, it is still common to refer negatively to the notion.³⁰

The first time that the concept *character indelebilis* was taught formally in the western church was in 1439, when Pope Eugene IV in the *Decree to the Armenians* wrote that the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and orders “imprint an indelible character on the soul which is a type of spiritual sign that is distinct from the rest. As a consequence they may not be repeated in the same person.”³¹ The reality behind the concept, of course, had much older origins, in the New Testament Paul wrote to the Corinthians that “God has anointed us, marking us with his seal” (*sphragisamenos*) (2 Cor 1:22), and to the Ephesians that they have been “stamped with the seal” (*esphragisthete*). The book of Revelation talks eschatologically about a “seal” (*sphragida*) (Rev 7:2, 9:4). The fathers of the early church adopted this vocabulary and used it for baptism and ordination. In ancient times a mark or brand – i.e., a *sphragis* – was used to identify a sheep in a flock or the soldiers in the Roman army. In the same way it was thought that baptism and ordination give a spiritual *sphragis* that, among other things, signifies ownership and the sign by which God will recognise his own.³²

From the fourth century this spiritual *sphragis* was often referred to as indestructible. Augustine seems to have been the first to state that ordination also entailed a permanent character, even though he probably relied on earlier traditions. He stated that the sacraments leave a lasting *signaculum*, or sign quality, on the person who receives it, which emphasised the parallels between the sacraments of baptism and ordination. Augustine’s emphasis was related to the Donatist controversy, and his concern was for the permanency of the sacramental act.³³

³⁰ E.g. Raun Iversen, ‘Theological and Liturgical Considerations’, p563f.

³¹ DzH 1313, at the Council of Florence.

³² Galot, *Teologia del sacerdozio*, p213ff; Zizioulas, ‘Ordination - A Sacrament?’, p39.

³³ Galot, *La natura du caractère sacramental*; Nichols, *Holy Orders*, p76; Dunn, *Priesthood*, p143.

The Scholastics later used the term *character* for the permanent sacramental effect on a person. From the 13th century, inspired by Aristotelian philosophy, it was common to explain the indelible character of ordination as a substantial ontological change in, and a quality of, the ordained person. This development is understandable, considering the rationalistic and legalistic understanding of Church and ministry that had developed at the start of the second millennium.³⁴ The priest was understood as a person who, through ordination, had received an ontological power to consecrate the holy eucharist. As noted, Pope Eugene IV expressed it more modestly in his Armenian decree, and so did the major scholastic theologians such as Bonaventura, Albertus Magnus, and Thomas Aquinas.³⁵ The ecclesiological focus, however, was upon the individual person and his individually-possessed power, and not on the community and the ordained ministers' service in and for the community. In contrast, Luther based his critique on an emphasis on the community and on the ordained minister as servant. He denied the concept of *character indelebilis*, since it was part of a totally different concept of Church and order, tracing the line from ontology to the person and to the individually-possessed power. As the reformers disputed the special indelible character as understood in the medieval period, there has traditionally been a reluctance among many Evangelic theologians to refer to ordination as a sacrament, or to say that it confers a special character. Luther denied the concept in *De Captivitate Babylonica*,³⁶ because he identified it with the separation between clergy and laypeople in the Church and with the clerical misconduct of his day. However, he did not elaborate any further on the possible truth or otherwise of the concept.

When the Council of Trent finally took place, it rejected the critique of the Evangelic reformers, and stated that:

If anyone says that in the three sacraments of baptism, confirmation and orders, there is not imprinted in the soul a character, that is, a certain spiritual and indelible sign, from which it follows that they cannot be repeated, let him be anathema (*signum quoddam spirituale et indelebile, unde ea iterari non possunt*).³⁷

According to this teaching, *character indelebilis* relates to the three sacraments of baptism, confirmation and ordination, which imprint an indelible character in the person who receives any of those three sacraments. It is worth noting that the indelible character relates not only to ordination, but also to baptism and confirmation. Legrand has remarked that it is paradoxical that there has been great interest in the topic of character of order, but

³⁴ Cf. Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996; Nichols, *Holy Orders*, 67ff.

³⁵ Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, p54f.

³⁶ Luther, 'De captivitate ecclesiae babylonica (1521)', p562f, 567.

³⁷ Seventh session of Trent, can. 9., DzH, 1609.

hardly any interest has been shown in that of baptism and confirmation. This shows that the debate about *character indelebilis* is not as much about sacramental theology as it is “a search for a rectification of the theology of the presbyteral office”.³⁸ It was also this concern that drew Luther to condemn the concept, as well as various interpretations of his time.

In contrast with the Evangelic reformers’ condemnation of the concept, the council Fathers did not define what this character is, except that it is a spiritual character that will safeguard the permanency of these three sacraments and that they may not be repeated. This seems to be the primary concern, which is reaffirmed later during the council of Trent without any further explanation of what this indelible character means.³⁹ The question is how the character should be understood. In the medieval period there were in fact many different understandings of ‘character’. Thomists and Scotists disagreed sharply over this matter, and not all of them held to an ontological interpretation.⁴⁰ Confronted with all these different interpretations of the concept, as well as with the Evangelic reformers’ critique of the indelible character, Trent wanted to avoid any determination about the nature of the character, and emphasised instead that it is not reducible to the external gesture of the rite.⁴¹ Thus the council Fathers did not establish an ontological understanding as the doctrine for the RCC, which means that the only thing a Roman Catholic is obliged to believe is what Trent, and later Vatican II, proclaims: that the three sacraments of baptism, confirmation and ordination bestow a spiritual and permanent character, which means that they cannot be repeated.⁴² That is also the Evangelic and Anglican understanding.

During the 20th century ecumenical dialogues, the Reformation controversy about *character indelebilis* has been overcome. The Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue in Germany notes that:

It is in fact true that in 1520 Luther related the anointing of the Holy Spirit solely to baptism, and hence to the priesthood of all believers. From 1522 onward, however, he talked about a special gift of the Holy Spirit in connection with the laying on of hands, among other places in his ordination formula of 1535. Even though the prayer for the gift of the Spirit at ordination is related to the ministry of the future office bearer, and not to his personal stage of grace as it were, he is nonetheless equipped for his ministry by the Spirit, and this means a permanent claim on his person; for ordination is not repeat-

³⁸ Legrand, ‘The “Indelible” Character and the Theology of Ministry’, p54; see also Nørgaard-Højen, *Den danske folkekirkens bekendelsesskrifter. Kommentar*, p282ff.

³⁹ Twenty-third session of Trent, Chapter 4. and can. 4., DzH, 1767 and 1774.

⁴⁰ Legrand, ‘The “Indelible” Character and the Theology of Ministry’, p58.

⁴¹ Ibid.; Legrand refers to Haring, ‘St Augustine’s Use of the Word “Character”’. Haring notes that Augustine never regarded character as a sign “in the soul” and that Cyprian said that a priest who leaves his office ceases to be a priest.

⁴² Legrand, ‘The “Indelible” Character and the Theology of Ministry’, p58.

ed. This means that ‘Lutherans in practice have the equivalent of the Catholic doctrine of the ‘priestly character’ (Malta 60)’.⁴³

The Lutheran-Roman Catholic report from Malta 1972 states similarly:

A certain rapprochement can be noticed also because of a change in the [Roman] Catholic understanding of ‘priestly character’. According to the original Augustinian understanding, this had to do with the outward call and ordination to public office in the church. Later, however, there was a shift to understanding this ‘character’ as an inner qualification of the person, and it was in this sense that it was rejected by the Reformers. In defence against a one-sided metaphysical understanding, many [Roman] Catholic theologians today emphasize a more strongly functional conception which is more acceptable to Lutherans. Furthermore, Lutherans in practice have the equivalent of the [Roman] Catholic doctrine of the ‘priestly character’ to the extent that they do not repeat ordination.⁴⁴

The statement of Tjørhom and Root, that the PCS takes an “intermediate position” between a functional and ontological understanding of ordination and ordained ministry, is in full accordance with the understandings of Trent and of the Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue, although not with some of the RC ontological interpretations of Trent, nor with some Lutheran functional interpretations of ordination and ordained ministry. The dialogue in Germany noted that:

The categories of the traditional Roman Catholic view were often interpreted in terms derived from Aristotelian ontology. But because they were really concerned with the ministerial function of the ordained person, they can also be expressed through functional definitions, which for their part, however, imply an ontology that is more strongly historically and personally oriented. This preserves the intention for faith of the doctrine about sacramentality as a permanent effect of ordination, as well as the pre-eminence of the divine effect on the human being that precedes all human activity; and this was the intention of the ontological description.⁴⁵

Cardinal Kasper has argued that the dichotomy between function and ontology does not survive analysis, but that they are closely connected. At the same time, Kasper reveals the confusion about the concepts when in practice he uses *ontology* with two different meanings:

Precisely when one understands function ... not [as] being an external function quality but [as] something that draws a person completely into service and seizes him, that one can see how it stamps a person in his very nature and how it is an ontological determination of that person, which does not exist *in*

⁴³ Lehmann and Pannenberg, *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era*, p152; See also Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p398f; Evans, *Problems of Authority*, p222.

⁴⁴ LRCJC, ‘Malta’, §60.

⁴⁵ Lehmann and Pannenberg, *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era*, p153.

addition to that person's essential relations and functions but rather *in* them. As soon as one frees oneself from a purely substantialist and 'heavy-handed' ontology, which was certainly not the ontology of the great theologians of the High Middle Ages, alternatives like that between ontological and functional disappear of themselves.⁴⁶

Kasper's combination of function and ontology beyond their earlier polarisation is equivalent to Tjørhom's and Root's description of the content of the PCS as a sacramental position between – or better, beyond – the functional and ontological concepts.⁴⁷ Tjørhom's and Kasper's approaches are examples of a general theological development during the 20th century that tries to overcome earlier polarised concepts. Sociological knowledge about institutional development is used to understand the development of the threefold ministry in the early church, not in contradiction of the work of the Holy Spirit, but as an emphasis on the incarnational principle. Similarly, concepts such as *iure divino* and *iure humano* are not understood in the same way as they were earlier. This development will be discussed further in Chapter 13.

The PCS gives ordained ministry an ecclesiological foundation that combines function and ontology in a sacramental understanding. The sacramental concept of ordination in the PCS sees it as a "setting aside of a person to a lifelong ordained office by prayer, invocation of the Holy Spirit and the laying on of hands".⁴⁸ §48 emphasises the permanent gift and faithful presence of the Holy Spirit in the Church of Christ, and that in the ordination of a bishop the laying on of hands and invocation of the Holy Spirit

transmits ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God's will and institution. Thus in the act of consecration a bishop receives the sign of divine approval and a permanent commission to lead his particular church in the common faith and apostolic life of all the churches.⁴⁹

If ordination is understood as an effective sacramental sign and as an instrument for the grace of God, as it is in the PCS, it may be asked how episcopal ministry can be conferred despite a break in episcopal succession. That was the crucial question put to the Porvoo solution, and to which we now turn.

⁴⁶ Kasper, 'Ministry in the Church', p189. See also Kasper, *Die Kirche und ihre Ämter*, p203ff. Kasper's approach was a reply to Schillebeeckx functional approach to ministry in Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*. Schillebeeckx later answered Kasper and other critiques in Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*. Schillebeeckx, like Hans Küng before him, rejected an ontological understanding of the priestly character, which had been used as a basis for excluding the possibility that the non-ordained could celebrate a valid eucharist. Both Küng and Schillebeeckx were denounced by the Roman Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; see e.g. Dulles, *The Priestly Office*, p3ff.

⁴⁷ For views similar to those of Tjørhom and Kasper, see Ratzinger, *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith*, p162ff; Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p164f, 225ff.

⁴⁸ PCS §41.

⁴⁹ PCS §48.

12. Sign and guarantee

The main focus during the Porvoo debate was on the question of episcopal succession – whether or not it was necessary, and whether a ministry with a break in succession could be recognised as valid. At the same time, both advocates and critics did not often consider the extended ecclesiological perspective on which the Porvoo solution is based. Also, when the ecclesiological perspective was referred to, it was not described in a way that convinced the critics of the Porvoo solution that it was possible. The reason for this is that, in the ecclesiological approach of the PCS, several questions on which criticism focused were never explained. Those questions concern the validity of ordained ministry, and whether episcopal ministry is understood as *iure divino* or *iure humano*. These are concepts that, as we saw in Chapter 2, the PCS does not use, with the result that the PCS was often interpreted on a different basis than that on which it is written, consequently with negative evaluation.

The aim of the PCS is to go beyond those questions through an ecclesio-logically-based treatment of the longstanding problem of episcopal succession. In pursuing this aim, the PCS does not explicitly discuss the question of validity or the divine or human origin of threefold ministry, but rather offers a more future-oriented approach.¹ However, though it is possible to state this, the issues themselves do not disappear by not being mentioned. In all contexts of the Porvoo debate those questions were present, and they influenced, in one way or another, how the Porvoo solution was understood. Both proponents and opponents were preoccupied with the questions about validity and the origin of order, in different ways that nevertheless mirrored each other. For example, the Danish theologian Peter Widmann stated that “the Reformation stands and falls with the view that there is only one office, the ministry of the word, and that it only exists in response to the calling of a parish”;² otherwise the Reformation must be understood as ‘illegitimate’ since it conducted non-episcopal ordinations. Correspondingly, but from the opposite position, the RC George H. Tavard asked of the Porvoo solution: “Can an order be transmitted by someone who does not have it?”³ These

¹ Tjørhom, ‘Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p172.

² Widmann, ‘Udtalelse om Porvoo-erklæringen’, p128, note 6. “Reformationen står og falder med, at der kun er et embede, ordets tjeneste, og at det alene er til for at følge en menigheds kald.”

³ Tavard, ‘A Catholic Reflection on the Porvoo Statement’, 355.

kinds of notions represent that juridical approach to ecclesiology and office that the PCS claims to have overcome through its sacramental ecclesiological approach. At the same time, the intention of the PCS is not to downgrade the importance of ordination, but to understand it as integral to ecclesiology. I shall come back to the question about the origin of ordained ministry in Chapter 13, and to the question about validity in Chapter 14. In this chapter, the question is how the PCS relates the *ontological* and the *functional positions* – as already described above in the introduction to Part III – to each other through its description of episcopal succession using the concepts *sign* and *guarantee*, and to overcome the polarisation of whether or not episcopal succession is a necessary requirement for the Church. Underlying this issue is the further question, as noted in Chapter 10, of how close the eschatological reality of the Church is related to the Church's structural or institutional reality. That question can also be described as how the Church is comprehended as both a divine and a human reality.

In the PCS this double nature of the Church is held together through a sacramental understanding – both material and spiritual, both functional and ontological, both terrestrial and celestial, both human and divine – and, concerning episcopal succession, elaborated in the important paragraphs §50-54, which present the Porvoo solution. Referring to BEM, the PCS states in part of §51:

The use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission. There have been schisms in the history of churches using the sign of historic succession. Nor does the sign guarantee the personal faithfulness of the bishop.

The PCS never actually quotes BEM's famous word about apostolic succession as *sign, though not a guarantee*,⁴ but it shines through. The intention in BEM and the PCS is to hold together the two positions in order to avoid two traps: identifying apostolicity either narrowly with episcopal succession (*pipeline succession*), or with a reality that is primarily internal and remains a mere abstraction that does not express apostolicity in concrete terms.⁵ The PCS's argument on this matter is hard to deny. As Church history teaches us, episcopal succession in itself is not a guarantee against schisms and heresies. There have been schisms in the Church with bishops in episcopal succession, including popes, who have not been faithful. However, BEM and the PCS do not understand episcopal succession in isolation but as integral to ecclesiology. The reasoning in BEM is crucial to the Porvoo solution and to understanding it. In a line of argument that is recognisably present in the PCS, and

⁴ BEM M§38.

⁵ Tjørhom, 'The Church and Its Apostolicity', p199f.

in which the two positions are easily discerned, BEM states in the Ministry section:

(§35) The primary manifestation of apostolic succession is to be found in the apostolic tradition of the Church as a whole. The succession is an expression of the permanence and, therefore, of the continuity of Christ's own mission in which the Church participates. Within the Church the ordained ministry has a particular task of preserving and actualizing the apostolic faith. The orderly transmission of the ordained ministry is therefore a powerful expression of the continuity of the Church throughout history; it also underlines the calling of the ordained ministry as the guardian of the faith. Where churches see little importance in orderly transmission, they should ask themselves whether they have not to change their conception of continuity in the apostolic tradition. On the other hand, where the ordained ministry does not adequately serve the proclamation of the apostolic faith, churches must ask themselves whether their ministerial structures are not in need of reform.

(§36) Under the particular historical circumstances of the growing Church in the early centuries, the succession of bishops became one of the ways, together with the transmission of the Gospel and the life of the community, in which the apostolic tradition of the Church was expressed. This succession was understood as serving, symbolizing and guarding the continuity of the apostolic faith and communion.

(§37) In churches which practice the succession through the episcopate, it is increasingly recognized that a continuity in apostolic faith, worship and mission has been preserved in churches which have not retained the form of historic episcopate. This recognition finds additional support in the fact that the reality and function of the episcopal ministry have been preserved in many of those churches, with or without the title 'bishop'. Ordination, for example, is always done in them by persons in whom the Church recognizes the authority to transmit the ministerial commission.

(§38) These considerations do not diminish the importance of the episcopal ministry. On the contrary, they enable churches which have not retained the episcopate to appreciate the episcopal succession as a sign, though not a guarantee, of the continuity and unity of the Church. [My emphasis].

With this in mind it may be asked: if episcopal succession is not a guarantee, is it actually worth anything? Both BEM and the PCS are clear on this point: the episcopal ministry in succession is not merely a symbol, but an effective sacramental sign and – in the words of BEM – “these considerations do not diminish the importance of the episcopal ministry”.⁶ Still, how should it be understood?

In the Porvoo debate, the presence in the PCS, albeit not literally, of BEM's notion *sign, though not a guarantee* was often noted; but there was confusion about the meaning of both *sign* and *guarantee*. The phrase *not a guarantee* led many critics to regard *sign* in the PCS as merely a symbol, like a road sign, but to miss the sacramental character of ordained ministry in

⁶ BEM M§38.

the PCS,⁷ although, it has to be said, *sign* is also used in the PCS in a symbolic sense. The fundamental question about *sign* and *guarantee* is: to what do the concepts refer? Of what is it a *sign* and a *guarantee*? And why is this important? Both BEM and the PCS say that episcopal succession is a sign of the apostolicity and succession of the whole Church.⁸ This means that the sign – i.e., episcopal succession – fundamentally refers to the apostles and to Jesus. The reason that this is important for the Church is that the people of God have to be assured – given a guarantee – that what they receive in the proclamation of the Gospel and in the sacraments of the Church, is the salvific reality given in communion with “the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit”.⁹ It is fundamental to the *fiducia* and faith of the faithful, that the Church knows that it can trust what it receives and believes in. In this interplay, *guarantee* has more than one dimension.

There are differences in how the PCS uses the concept of *guarantee* from how BEM uses it. The PCS emphasises the guarantee giving reality of the sign more than BEM does. The difference is an important development in the PCS of how BEM relates the two positions and the concepts of *sign* and *guarantee* to each other; and this makes the language and the description in the PCS more distinct. While BEM uses *guarantee* as a noun – *a sign, though not a guarantee* – and in an absolute way, the PCS uses *guarantee* as a verb: *episcopal succession does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission* – which means that episcopal succession is regarded as a guaranteeing sign, although not in every aspect and not in an absolute way. That episcopal succession *does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a church* means that episcopal succession should not be interpreted as isolated from the apostolic tradition of the whole church. That is, the notion serves to prevent an interpretation of it as *pipeline succession*. The guaranteeing reality of the Church depends on more than mere episcopal succession. As an example that episcopal succession cannot be regarded as an absolute guarantee of the church’s fidelity, the PCS refers to the schisms in the Church despite episcopal succession. The sign also does not guarantee the personal fidelity of the bishop, which means that the Church is dependent on the fidelity of persons chosen and ordained to be the concrete focus, in a visible and personal way, of the apostolicity of the whole Church.¹⁰ This corresponds with a general feature in the ecclesiology of the PCS, which is the church’s total dependence and reliance on “the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit”,¹¹ demanding the fidelity not only of the episcopal minister but also of the whole Church.

⁷ Cf. the ELCD’s formal motivation for its approval of the PD in 2009.

⁸ BEM M§35, PCS §50.

⁹ PCS §21. Cf. also Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p347 who notes this.

¹⁰ PCS §46.

¹¹ PCS §21.

But still: what is the guaranteeing aspect of the sign, even if it does not apply to every aspect? In order to clarify the PCS view, it is fruitful to consider how the RCC answered BEM in relation to the concepts *sign* and *guarantee*:

[The bishop's] ministry is a sacramental sign of integration and a focus of communion. Through the episcopal succession, the bishop embodies and actualises both catholicity in time, i.e. the continuity of the church across the generations, as well as the communion lived in each generation. The actual community is thus linked up through a personal sign with the apostolic origin, its teaching and way of living. In that perspective, episcopal succession can rightly be called a *guarantee* of the continuity and unity of the church, if one recognizes in it the expression of Christ's faithfulness to the church to the end of time. At the same time it lays upon each individual office-bearer the responsibility to be a faithful and diligent guarantor.¹²

BEM says *sign, though not a guarantee*; the Roman response appears to state the opposite: that episcopal succession is a *guarantee* of the church's apostolicity and preserved communion with the apostolic Church. At the same time, the RCC says that this guarantee depends on the individual bishop's fidelity in life and teaching. In those two aspects of the Roman response to BEM, there is a tension that BEM has tried to resolve through its famous notion of *sign, though not a guarantee*.

Considering the closeness of BEM and the PCS, this seems to imply that there is a contradiction between the understanding of the PCS and that of the RCC. Nonetheless, if we read their respective approaches carefully, they are actually in full accord with each other.¹³ As we have seen, the PCS emphasises that the sign "does not *by itself* guarantee" the church's fidelity, and "nor does the sign guarantee the personal faithfulness of the bishop". Likewise the RCC does not claim that the apostolicity of the Church is unquestionably assured by a historically demonstrable episcopal succession. The RCC says that, through the episcopal succession, the actual community is "linked up through a personal sign with the apostolic origin, its teaching and way of living". Correspondingly, the PCS says that "apostolic succession in the episcopal office is a visible and personal way of focusing the apostolicity of the whole Church", which is about "the continuity of the ministry of oversight". In both cases the churches emphasise the apostolicity of the whole Church as primary, and the succession of bishops as a way to express and preserve the church's apostolicity.¹⁴ Fundamentally the guarantee is the

¹² *Churches respond to BEM*, Vol. VI, Faith & Order paper 144, 1987, p33.

¹³ Cf. Roelvink, Henrik, "Borgåöverenskommelsen – möjligheter och svårigheter", i; *Signum*, nr 4, 1994 (1994C), p119. Roelvink: "The distinction between guarantee and sign is fruitful also for Roman Catholic theology. For us too it is the Church that ensures salvation."

¹⁴ Cf. Kasper, 'Zur Frage der Anerkennung der Ämter', p108. Kasper: "the institutional criteria are effective and fully signs, but no guarantee", „Die institutionelle Kriterien sind wirkmächtige und erfüllte Zeichen, aber Keinen Garantien". Cf. also the CoE House of Bishops,

promise of Christ to be with his Church and those he has called and to whom he has given the Holy Spirit. §51 of the PCS refers to §36, which emphasises that “the same Lord who sent the apostles continues to be present in the Church. The Spirit keeps the Church in the apostolic tradition until the fulfilment of history in the Kingdom of God.”¹⁵ In §46 the PCS states that “the ultimate ground of the fidelity of the Church, in continuity with the apostles, is the promise of the Lord and the presence of the Holy Spirit at work in the whole Church. The continuity of the ministry of oversight is to be understood within the continuity of the apostolic life of the whole Church.”¹⁶ This promise of Christ means a guarantee since it is based on the fidelity of Christ to his church, but simultaneously it means a demand on the fidelity of the Church and the individual bishop,¹⁷ which is the content of the qualification *does not by itself guarantee* to the *sign* of episcopal succession.

In other words, *guarantee* is to be understood in two ways. On the one hand, guarantee is related to the individual bishop and the episcopal succession by itself and it is stated by the PCS, which is confirmed in the RC response to BEM, that “the episcopal succession does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission. ... Nor does the sign guarantee the personal faithfulness of the bishop”.¹⁸ On the other hand, guarantee relates to the promise of Christ that God will protect his Church from definitive error on issues of vital importance in his revelation of himself and that “the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt 16:18). It is God who has called and sent his Church and instituted the means of grace as effective signs of which ordained ministry is one and his promise is to be with his Church till the end of time (Matt 28:16, Eph 21:20, Rev. 21:14).¹⁹ Traditionally this trust of the Church in the guidance of the Holy Spirit, has given rise to the concept of the *indefectibility of the church*.²⁰ The promise is given to the Church as a whole and of which the individual bishop is a sign,²¹ but which necessarily demands the personal

which in a comment on the RC response to BEM states that the RCC’s use of the word ‘guarantee’ “does not claim that the indefectibility, infallibility and apostolicity of the Church are unquestionably assured merely by a historically demonstrable laying on of hands from the time of the apostles. It follows that the word ‘guarantee’ should be understood in the context of a system of symbols and symbolic language. Symbols and symbolic language give and communicate meaning in complex and subtle ways. The historic episcopal succession is an expression first of Christ’s faithfulness to the Church, second of the Church’s intention to remain faithful to the apostles’ teaching and mission. It is a means both of upholding that intention and of giving the faithful the confident assurance that the Church lives in continuity with the Lord’s apostles and in anticipation of a glory yet to be fully disclosed.” CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*, p24, §63.

¹⁵ PCS §36, which quotes BEM M§34.

¹⁶ PCS §46.

¹⁷ E.g. PCS §47.

¹⁸ *Churches respond to BEM*, Vol. VI, Faith & Order paper 144, 1987, p33.

¹⁹ Cf. LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p266, §58.

²⁰ USA/LRCD, *Teaching Authority & Infallibility in the Church*, p25, §28f, p65, §14.

²¹ PCS §46ff.

faithfulness of the individual bishop in communion with the college of bishops and the whole church.²²

The double perspective of the church, as both an eschatological and an earthly reality, as already and not yet, is demonstrated in Paul's letters: on the one hand he states that the Church is Holy, but at the same time he states that the Church has to become Holy and be Holy as it already is.²³ This means on the one hand that the Church has the Holiness given and assured by Christ and in the Holy Spirit, but it does not mean that the Church owns holiness or Grace. However, as stated in the Donatist controversy, and restated in the CA 8, the sacramental reality and grace are given through the sacraments even when conducted by an unworthy minister and the guarantee-giving reality of the sacramental sign is stronger and not just restricted to the mere fidelity of the individual office bearer.

The emphasis on the one hand on the promise of Christ, on the other hand on the responsibility of the individual bishop as a person in communion with the whole church, represents an ecclesiological change from the earlier *possessive* to a *fiducial* ecclesiological approach.²⁴ The term 'fiducial' embodies another important characteristic of the holistic ecclesiology formulated in the PCS, as a deeper ecclesiology beyond the medieval fragmented and possessive ecclesiology. This means that the Church does not own the grace of God, but trusts that the grace is given through God's presence in his Church and according to his will and promise.²⁵ This promise and presence should not be understood as an abstract spiritual presence, but sacramentally as given to the Church as a concrete communion and through the sacramental means instituted by God, i.e., the sacraments and the ordained ministry. As to the second meaning of 'guarantee', this means that it requires the fidelity of the Church and its ordained ministers.²⁶ Through this twofold meaning of 'guarantee', the PCS understands the sign of episcopal succession as a guarantee; but this guarantee is restricted and "does not by itself guarantee the fidelity of a church to every aspect of the apostolic faith, life and mission".²⁷

The PCS's use of *sign* and *guarantee* serves the purpose of gradating the emphasis on episcopal succession as a sacramental sign without exclusively identifying apostolicity with episcopal succession. While this gradation, given the numerous examples of apostasy and unfaithfulness through history, can be strongly argued, it does not by itself imply that the reverse is also true – that churches without episcopal succession can be apostolic. Or put

²² PCS §37, 44-45.

²³ E.g. Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth 1:2.

²⁴ *Fiducial* after *fiducia*, the faith, in the meaning trust, the Church has in the promises of Jesus, in contrast to faith in the meaning *notitia*, a cognitive belief that e.g. God exist or not. See e.g. Audi, *Rationality and Religious Commitment*, p71.

²⁵ About church and pneumatology, e.g. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p19f.

²⁶ This does not change the meaning of CA 8.

²⁷ PCS §50, cf. USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p21, §77.

differently: since apostolicity and apostolic succession, according to the PCS and consistent with the wider ecumenical movement,²⁸ are necessary dimensions of the Church of Christ, the question could be formulated as follows: Is episcopal succession a necessary expression and means – that is, what the PCS calls a ‘sign’ – of the Church’s apostolicity? In the Porvoo debate that question was also formulated as a question about whether ordained ministry was one or three; and that is the subject of the next chapter.

²⁸ Cf. Chapter 2.3.1. and in particular the LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p268,§63. “For the *Lutheran* tradition also the apostolic succession is necessary and constitutive for both the church and for its ministry. Its confessional writings claim to stand in the authentic Catholic tradition, and emphasize the historical continuity of the church which has never ceased to exist.”

13. Threefold ministry

In the second chapter it was noted that there has been an ecumenical development towards a general recognition that it is the Church as a whole that is apostolic, and that apostolicity is a characteristic of the whole Church, not merely of the hierarchy in the narrow sense. In the Porvoo debate this recognition was true for (1) those who emphasised the necessity of the sacramental line of ordinations and episcopal succession; (2) those who understood episcopal succession to be non-essential; and (3) those who sought an “embracing” position. The first position was represented by some Orthodox,¹ RC,² Old Catholic and Anglican theologians,³ who welcomed the ecclesiological perspective in the PCS, but also emphasised that this does not mean that episcopal succession is not necessary.⁴ I refer to this as the *ontological position*. The second position was common in the Danish Porvoo debate. It understood the PCS to say that the Anglicans had abandoned their appreciation of episcopacy and episcopal succession. I have named this the *Protestant position*. The third position is represented by BEM and by the PCS, which goes beyond the two positions and regards episcopal succession as an effective sign, although not a guarantee in every respect (§51), which lays the basis for the Porvoo solution and the mutual recognition of the Porvoo churches (§52-53).

It follows from those three positions that the third position cannot be understood as if the line of sacramental ordination in episcopal succession does not matter. Any such claim is a contradiction, since it means that position three is changed and in fact becomes position two. As we saw in Chapter 12, both BEM and the PCS state that episcopal ministry in succession is not merely a symbol, but an effective sacramental sign; and that the understanding of episcopal succession as a *sign, although not a guarantee*, as formulated by BEM, does “not diminish the importance of the episcopal ministry”.⁵ Rather, as a solution the PCS is only meaningful if its focal point, episcopal succession, is understood in its strong sense – i.e., as an effective sacramental sign of the church’s apostolicity. Without such an understanding there is

¹ Tsetsis, Bouteneff, Tudorie.

² Morerod, Sullivan, Yarnold and Tavad.

³ Clark, Hunwicke and Kirk. Old Catholic Parmentier had a similar view.

⁴ See Chapters 5.3.3, 6.4.2. and 6.5. for the negative critique of Anglican, RCC, Old Catholic and Orthodox theologians.

⁵ BEM M§38.

no radicalism, only a changed evaluation of succession. If the sign is not understood in its strong sense, the basis of the agreement and the problem to solve is considered in its essence to be as nothing. If that had been the case, there would have been no need for the Porvoo solution in the first place. (The need for an agreement and declaration is another matter.) The question at stake is whether the Porvoo solution is possible – i.e., is it really a solution?

The Porvoo solution gave rise to two basic questions in the Porvoo debate: (1) How can an episcopate outside episcopal succession be valid? This question will be treated in the next chapter. (2) Why is episcopacy and the threefold ministry necessary for the church? This question was asked by a number of critics of the PCS, and posed by people in both the Protestant and the ontological positions and from various angles. Much Protestant criticism stated only that ordained ministry is one and not three, but there were also theologians, of both positions, who problematised the issue in relation to the PCS and Meissen.⁶ In the background of this issue is the question of the origin of episcopacy and whether the threefold ministry is seen to be instituted *iure divino* or *iure humano*.

In this chapter I will examine the question of the threefold ministry, which the PCS uses as an instrument for unity. At the same time, there is a tension in how the PCS makes use of the threefold ministry. While it is emphasised in principle as an instrument for unity, in practice not all three forms of the ordained ministry are used as a means for unity, but episcopacy alone. This creates a tension within an ordained ministry that is seen as threefold in principle, but in practice is twofold. As a means for unity, consensus about the content and expression of episcopacy is required of the Porvoo churches in order to reach the intended unity. The same is not the case with the diaconate, about which it is stated that the different understandings and practices of the diaconate will be resolved once the PD has been approved, and in a mutual process of deeper theological exploration.⁷ In this the PCS follows the recommendations in BEM, which states that “differences in ordering the diaconal ministry should not be regarded as a hindrance for the mutual recognition of the ordained ministries”.⁸

My point here is to call attention to the fact that there is a tension in the PCS between the emphasis on threefold ministry as a necessary means for unity, and the unclear understanding of the diaconate.⁹ In a way this unresolved question demonstrates the accuracy of the BEM notion, that all

⁶ Chapter 3-6.

⁷ PCS §58b(vii).

⁸ BEM M§31 (commentary).

⁹ The PCS is not alone in revealing a tension between the emphasis on the threefold ministry and the uncertain perception and function of the diaconal ministry; see RCC, ‘Lumen Gentium’, p42f, §29; and in the LWF, ‘The Lund Statement’, p7f, §39.

churches need to deepen their understanding of the threefold ministry.¹⁰ It also demonstrates a vital aspect of the PCS, which is its double nature in not only accomplishing unity, but also initiating a process of mutually deepening the unity thus achieved. Incontrovertibly, it is true that, when the PCS reaches a common understanding and practice of the diaconal ministry, that would mean an elaborated and deepened unity. The tension further demonstrates the differences in importance between episcopate and the diaconate as means for unity, in which the episcopate is clearly stated to be a focus and expression of unity, while the importance of the diaconate is seen more as an expression of a common understanding, rather than an ordinance effecting unity in the way that the episcopacy does sacramentally.¹¹ These remarks about the diaconate are sufficient to draw attention to the special problems that are attached to the diaconate and the threefold ministry.¹²

Another issue concerns episcopal succession and the threefold ministry. Considering that the threefold ministry is not equivalent to episcopal succession, it might be asked: Why focus on the threefold ministry when the investigation is about apostolic and episcopal succession? A church can be episcopally-ordered with bishops who are not in episcopal succession. In the Anglican-Lutheran dialogue it has been proposed that all persons who exercise an ordained ministry of episcopate should receive the title of bishop or suffragan bishop, irrespective of episcopal succession.¹³ In the Porvoo debate, apostolic succession was often identified in a narrow sense with episcopal succession, which in much Protestant critique meant a denial of the necessity of both episcopacy and succession. In contrast to this denial, the Lutheran confessions do explicitly operate with the concept of an apostolic succession of ordained ministers.¹⁴ In his commentary on Galatians (1535), Luther describes how the apostles called their followers, such as Timothy and Titus, who then appointed bishops as their successors. According to Luther, this succession had continued up to his own time, and would do so to the end of the world.¹⁵ This means that Luther operates with the rule of apostolic succession, seen as episcopal succession, and that he even regarded this

¹⁰ BEM M§25.

¹¹ PCS §48.

¹² For an extended discussion about the diaconate in the Porvoo Communion, see Pädam, *Ordination of Deacons*; Pädam, 'Towards a Common Understanding of Diaconal Ministry?' As far back as 1909, Anglican delegates did not regard the absence of a diaconate in the CoS as being of crucial importance. See Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*, p212.

¹³ ALIC, 'Niagara', p109, §89.

¹⁴ Piepkorn, 'The Sacred Ministry and Holy Ordination', p110f with reference to SA III, 10; Tr 72, *adhibitis suis pastoribus*, "using their own pastors for this purpose" and SA II 4, 9. Lehmann and Pannenberg, *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era*, p155.; LRCJC, 'The Ministry in the Church (1981)', p268, §64; Petri, 'Een christelighen formanig til clerekrigt', p355.

¹⁵ Luther, 'Commentary on the Galatians ([1531] 1535)', WA 40/1, 59, 14b-24; for a comment, see Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p401.

rule to be unchangeable.¹⁶ The reason that the reformers in the end regarded it as possible to ordain presbyterally was the medieval presbyteral conception of ordained ministry; and it was seen as a temporary emergency solution. However, in this new situation account was also taken of apostolic succession and only ordained ministers ordained new ministers, according to the rule of canon 4 of Nicea in 325, which requires at least three ministers to participate in the ordination. Behind this view of succession is Jerome's understanding of both presbyters and bishops as successors of the apostles.

In line with this view, the LWF has stated that "within the apostolic continuity of the whole church there is a continuity or succession in the ordained ministry. This succession serves the church's continuity in its life in Christ and its faithfulness to the gospel transmitted by the apostles."¹⁷ Consequently, the issue, contrary to much Protestant critique, is not primarily whether or not ministerial succession is necessary for the church, but whether or not this necessary ministerial succession has to be episcopal.

13.1. Threefold ministry – Necessary or not?

In a discussion of Meissen and the PCS, referred to earlier,¹⁸ Dalferth questioned the Anglican emphasis on episcopacy and threefold ministry as necessary requirements for unity,¹⁹ at the same time as the sacramental acts conducted by ordained ministers in the EKD are recognised as valid. He asked:

If there is no fundamental difference with regard to the carrying out of ordained ministry, there is then no theological reason (as distinct from a legal one) to demand the re-ordination of non-episcopally ordained ministers. ... That can only mean that the demand that other churches take over the historic episcopate and episcopal ordination as a condition and pre-condition for the establishment of unlimited Eucharistic fellowship with other churches is dropped. ... Why then is the claim held to that the historic episcopate and the threefold ministry 'in historic succession' which is linked to it must be the future pattern of the one ordained ministry of Word and Sacrament? Is not a legal situation in the Church of England here given an ecclesiological weight which, theological speaking, it does not deserve?²⁰

For Dalferth, the problem with the Anglican understanding of threefold ministry is that it is not *theologically* motivated. In Dalferth's view, such a func-

¹⁶ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p401; cf. Petri, 'CO 1571', p160f.

¹⁷ LWF, 'The Lund Statement', p7, §35; cf. LRCJC, 'The Ministry in the Church (1981)', p268, §63f.

¹⁸ See Chapter 6.2.3.

¹⁹ I discussed this issue earlier in my investigation of the Danish Porvoo debate and concerning the dean as a possible minister of ordination. See Chapter 5.5.4.

²⁰ Dalferth, 'Ministry and the Office of Bishop', p27. The question is already described in ALIC, 'Pullach', p36, §85.

tional understanding cannot motivate episcopacy as necessary, only as contingent.

Dalferth based his critique of the CoE position on a description that was intended to demonstrate that the episcopal ordering in the CoE is primarily a matter – in the terminology of Dalferth – of history and politics, not of theology. According to this description, the Anglican stress on episcopacy as necessary for the church was originally a way for the English church to remain independent of the state and to preserve its freedom. In Dalferth's view, this cannot be understood as a theological factor for the church, but only a legal regulation.²¹ Dalferth did not note it – since his focus was on the CoE – but the same emphasis as that found in the English church was argued by Archbishop Petri of Uppsala in relation to the Swedish King. This was an important argument for the episcopal ordering of the church and a way to preserve its freedom against the intrusion of secular power.²² Neither did he reflect on the fact that the separation of secular and ecclesial interests was also one of the main concerns for the Evangelic reformers, in order to restore the episcopal office of their time to a truly pastoral ministry.²³

Behind Dalferth's position is his ecclesiology of fundamentals,²⁴ and the question of the origin of the episcopal ministry. Dalferth noted that the PCS approaches the question of apostolic succession from an ecclesiological perspective; but he did not reflect on the changed ecclesiology and its possible importance for the threefold ministry. He problematised the Anglican position in Meissen and in the PCS, but not the Protestant position and the ecclesiology of fundamentals. Nor did he see any problems over the question of *ius divinum* or the relation between history, theology and pneumatology. Dalferth's critique is a sharply-formulated contribution to the Porvoo debate. However, his ecclesiological perspective does not do the PCS justice,²⁵ with some unwarranted interpretations as a consequence.²⁶ His position could be characterised as *theological reductionism*,²⁷ i.e., an understanding that does not sufficiently consider the importance of history and sociology for the development of ordained ministry, but understands theology as an isolated

²¹ Dalferth, 'Ministry and the Office of Bishop', p25, 41.

²² Brodd, 'Den helige Andes gåva', p127.

²³ Cf. CA 28 and Chapter 13.3.1. below.

²⁴ See Chapter 10.2.

²⁵ I am not alone in this critique. See Jones, 'Visibility as Ecclesiological Criterion' who criticises Dalferth's interpretation as sharp but far too limited. See also Tjørhom, 'The Church and Its Apostolicity', p203 who states that 'Dalferth's understanding of the Porvoo statement would seem rather foreign to the authors of the text'; Avis, *Reshaping Ecumenical Theology*, p53ff.

²⁶ Dalferth, 'Ministry and the Office of Bishop', p38f. E.g., his discussion of the relation between *episcopé* and episcopacy, that are separated as the first is necessary but the latter is contingent; while the PCS keeps them together as necessary in PCS §32k.

²⁷ For a discussion of theological reductionism that ignores socio-historical dimensions, in opposition to an interpretation that takes account of both dimensions, see Schillebeeckx, *The Church with a Human Face*, p4ff. See also Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*, p100.

entity without contact with the historical and sociological reality of the Church. Still, Dalferth's basic question about the motivation for the necessity of threefold ministry in the PCS is relevant.

From different ecclesiological perspectives, Morerod and Wainwright critiqued the Anglican approach in similar terms. Morerod stated:

Although the Anglicans do not recognize German Protestant ministries as apostolically valid, the Church of England joins all member Churches of the Meissen Agreement in saying that the Eucharist is validly administered in all member Churches. It therefore seems that episcopacy is not a necessary constituent of the validity of the Eucharist.²⁸

Morerod did not argue why episcopacy is regarded as necessary for the validity of the eucharist, other than that it is the RC view and that episcopacy a necessary requirement for the validity of ordination. From the RC perspective, however, the issue is not as clear-cut as Morerod describes it; and this reveals a tension in the RC position, similar to the Anglican one that Morerod criticises. Cardinal Ratzinger, later quoted by the USA/LRCD,²⁹ has stated that "I count among the most important results of the ecumenical dialogues the insight that the issue of eucharist cannot be narrowed to the problem of 'validity.' Even a theology oriented to the concept of succession, such as that which holds in the [Roman] Catholic and in the Orthodox church, need not in any way deny the salvation-granting presence of the Lord in an Evangelic Lord's supper."³⁰ This is also the Anglican understanding,³¹ as formulated by the Lambeth Conference in 1920,³² and restated in 1948. The Conference of 1948 stated that for Anglicans it is impossible either "to declare the sacraments of non-episcopal bodies null and void", or "to treat non-episcopal ministries as identical in status and authority with the episcopal ministry".³³ Since then, and through its ecumenical involvement, the Anglican notions of ecclesiology and episcopal ministry have developed.³⁴

Ratzinger based his statement on the writings of Vatican II and the results of the ecumenical dialogue, which in turn are based upon a rereading of the history of theology. Such a rereading reveals that the issue is not as polarised as the Protestant dichotomy between 'theological' and 'functional' and post-Reformation controversial theology have indicated.³⁵ In the Reformation

²⁸ Morerod, 'Reflections on Five Recent Agreements', p92. The same is stated by Wainwright, 'Is Episcopal Succession a Matter of Dogma for Anglicans?', p175.

²⁹ USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p28, §107.

³⁰ Ratzinger, 'Briefwechsel von Landesbischof Hanselmann und Cardinal Ratzinger', p348.

³¹ This view is expressed in Meissen. See also Avis, 'Seeking Unity by Stages: New Paths in Ecumenical Method', p230.

³² Lambeth Conference, 'Resolution 9, 'Appeal to All Christian People', 1920'. The same point was also re-affirmed by the CoE, *Lambeth Conference 1988*, p139, §63.

³³ *Lambeth Conferences, 1867-1948*, p50.

³⁴ See Chapter 4.3.1; Tanner, 'The Effect of BEM on the CoE'.

³⁵ Cf. discussion in Chapter 11 about 'ontological', 'functional' and 'sacramental'.

controversy the doctrine of ordained ministry was not a major item, but it was secondary to the real controversy. The Lutheran confessions do not in fact give much attention to ordained ministry.³⁶ This stands in contrast to the later focus on the validity of ministry in the post-Reformation debate as a way of demonstrating the superiority of each tradition over the other. That discussion was defined by the controversial situation, and at its centre was the question of the origin of ordained ministry and its organisation, which was a search for the basis for a ministry that is true (i.e., valid) or not true. As shown in Part II, at the heart of that search – and behind the demand of Dalferth and other Protestant critiques for a theological argument in favour of threefold ministry – lies the question whether threefold ministry is instituted *ius divinum* or *ius humanum*.³⁷

13.2. *Ius divinum et ius humanum*

While there was a general agreement in the Porvoo debate that ordained ministry is instituted by God,³⁸ the origin of its organisation as one or three was much-debated. Theologians from the ontological position questioned whether the PCS really states that episcopacy is necessary, since it overlooks a break in episcopal succession. The critique was based on an emphasis on episcopal ministry as necessary for the Church and its apostolic succession, but without explicit reference to threefold ministry as instituted *iure divino*. Morerod refers implicitly to episcopacy as *iure divino* when he criticised the CoS and the Evangelic Lutheran Church of Finland for not regarding episcopal ministry as instituted by divine right.³⁹ The critique of the ontological position was based on a close connecting of episcopacy and apostolic succession and on maintaining that one cannot exist without the other. The position could be described as regarding episcopal succession to be *necessary but not sufficient* for the apostolicity of the church.⁴⁰

Theologians from the Protestant position emphasised in general that episcopacy and threefold ministry are possible in principle, but – understood as a result of historical development – the threefold ministry should be regarded as only one expression of the church's ordained ministry, and not as necessary for unity. This argument regarded episcopal ministry as *iure humano*. According to this view, ordinances instituted *iure divino* are *necessary* in the church, since they are instituted by God; while ordinances instituted *iure humano* are *contingent*, since they are seen only as a result of human effort

³⁶ Reumann, 'Ordained Minister and Layman in Lutheranism', p228.

³⁷ This was the critique of VELKD, which emphasised that episcopacy is not necessary because it is only a historical development; see Chapter 6.2.1. and in ELCD, see Chapter 5.

³⁸ PCS §32j.

³⁹ Morerod, 'Reflections on Five Recent Agreements', p109f.

⁴⁰ I will come back to *necessary, but not sufficient* in Chapter 14.3.

and historical development. Applied to ordained ministry, this means for the Protestant position that ordained ministry is *necessary* because it is instituted by God; but its particular form is only *contingent*, since it is simply the result of a historical development.

A related approach to the question about *ius divinum/ius humanum* is the Anglican terminology and discussion whether episcopal succession belongs to the *esse*, *bene esse*, or *plene esse* of the church. That approach categorises the Church in either *ontological* or *functional* terms, and thus as either necessary or contingent respectively. In a conference about Meissen, Leuenberg and the PCS, Bishop Hind stated that the PCS is open to all three positions.⁴¹ While it is possible to say this, if this kind of terminology is applied to the PCS, it means a different ecclesiological perspective than that used in the PCS, as Hind had already argued in the 1994 General Synod of the CoE.⁴² As been noted, the PCS does not define the *essence of Christianity* or the *fundamentals of the church*; neither does it make a distinction between *essentials* and *adiaphora*. To read the PCS in the perspective of *esse*, *bene esse* or *plene esse* does not do the PCS's approach justice, but rather confuses two different ecclesiological approaches.

For a long time – and in the post-Trent controversial theology – the question was whether the differentiation of ordained ministry should be regarded as *iure divino* or as a purely historical development and *iure humano*, or – at the very least – that the Church was guided by the Holy Spirit. This understanding was based on medieval perceptions. For the theological discussion of the 16th century, every practice in the Church was either *iure divino* or *iure humano*. No practice could be both. Both the Lutheran Confessions and the Council of Trent understood *ius divinum* as referring to that which is permanently required in the church.⁴³ While it is necessary for the Church to discern what is permanently given to it through the ages, the method for how this is done has become more delicate, and the reliability of the *ius divinum* language has been questioned.

In the 20th century the ecumenical movement and many systematic theologians have stated that the polarisation between *ius divinum* and *ius humanum* is false, and that there is a need for a new language.⁴⁴ Several ecumenical dialogues have described this. The *Malta Report* states:

Greater awareness of the historicity of the church in conjunction with a new understanding of its eschatological nature, requires that in our day the concepts of *ius divinum* and *ius humanum* be thought through anew. In both concepts the word *ius* is employed in a merely analogical sense. *Ius divinum* can

⁴¹ Chapter 7.1.3., with reference to Hind, 'The PCS: Process and Contents', p150ff.

⁴² Chapter 4.3.3 and Bishop John Hind, speech in; CoE, General Synod, 'General Synod 1994', p213f.

⁴³ Lindbeck, 'Papacy and Ius Divinum', p202.

⁴⁴ See e.g. Peter, 'Dimensions of Jus Divinum in Roman Catholic Theology'; Schlink, 'Zur Unterscheidung von Ius divinum und ius humanum'.

never be adequately distinguished from *ius humanum*. We have the *ius divinum* always only as mediated through particular historical forms. These mediating forms must be understood not only as the product of a sociological process of growth but, because of the pneumatic nature of the church, they can be experienced also as a fruit of the spirit.⁴⁵

According to *Malta*, the traditional lines of demarcation from the medieval period can be viewed differently, and it is possible to find new expressions for a common understanding beyond the earlier divergences.⁴⁶

A few years later the USA/LRCD stated in a consensus statement about papal primacy that, while the RCC has held that the papacy exists *iure divino*, “Lutherans have held, in opposition to this, that the papacy was established by human law, the will of men, and that its claim to divine right is nothing short of blasphemous”.⁴⁷ The commission added that the “traditional sharp distinction between divine and human institution is no longer useful”, and said, as an example, that while Roman Catholics “continue to emphasize that papal primacy is an institution in accordance with God’s will”, for Lutherans the one thing necessary “is that papal primacy serve the gospel and that its exercise of power not subvert Christian freedom”.⁴⁸ The Lutheran counterparts established that the traditional distinction between *ius divinum* and *ius humanum* “fails to provide usable categories for contemporary discussion of the papacy”.⁴⁹ Likewise the RC delegates declared that, although they understood the papacy to be divinely instituted, the term “divine right” is burdened with many historical implications and “does not adequately communicate what we believe concerning the divine institution of the papacy”.⁵⁰ The same view was expressed by ARCIC in 1976 on *Authority in the Church*, which affirmed that “the First Vatican Council of 1870 uses the language of ‘divine right’ of the successors of Peter. This language has no clear interpretation in modern Roman Catholic theology”.⁵¹

The second round of the ARCIC dialogue on *Authority in the Church* focused on four themes identified in the first round, of which the issue of *ius divinum* was one.⁵² The commission did not treat the fundamental question of *ius divinum* and what it is, but affirmed that:

⁴⁵ LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p175, §31.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p176, §36.

⁴⁷ USA/LRCD, *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue. 5, Papal Primacy and the Universal Church*, p13, §7.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p22, §30.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p31, §35; See also Peter, ‘Dimensions of Jus Divinum in Roman Catholic Theology’; and Piepkorn, ‘Ius Divinum and Adiaphoron’.

⁵⁰ USA/LRCD, *Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue. 5, Papal Primacy and the Universal Church*, p34.

⁵¹ ARCIC, ‘Authority in the Church II’, p97, §24.

⁵² The other three focused on Petrine texts in the NT, jurisdiction in the church, and infallibility.

The first Vatican Council used the term *jure divino* to say that this primacy derives from Christ. While there is no universally accepted interpretation of this language, all affirm that it means at least that this primacy expresses God's purpose for his Church.⁵³

Based on this conviction, and on the view that “being in canonical communion with the bishop of Rome is not among the necessary elements by which a Christian community is recognized as a church”, as exemplified by the Orthodox churches, the commission stated that “it is reasonable to ask whether a gap really exists between the assertion of a primacy by divine right (*jure divino*) and the [Anglican] acknowledgement of its emergence by divine providence (*divina providentia*)”.⁵⁴

While none of those ecumenical dialogues really answer the question about how *ius divinum* might be understood or how it is established, besides stating that the language is inadequate, it is possible to establish a few things. One is that the purpose of the *ius divinum* language was to define what is permanently given by Christ and therefore is normative for the Church through time. While there is still a need to establish what is permanently given in the Church, the method for doing so has changed. According to the ecumenical documents, new historical and ecclesiological knowledge have relativised the notion of *ius divinum* and opened the way for a new understanding. There have been attempts to develop theories and defend the issue of *ius divinum*,⁵⁵ but none has really been commonly accepted. The issue is what this new understanding is, especially since the Protestant critique of the PCS was based on the dichotomy between divine and human law – that is, the very language that the ecumenical dialogues have described as inadequate.

The confusion becomes even greater in the discussion about threefold ministry, because of a confusion of concepts. As described in Chapter Two, the PCS does not use the *ius divinum* terminology. However, the PCS does state that ordained ministry is instituted by God,⁵⁶ since that was agreed on and not controversial, but without the *ius* terminology. In the discussion about the form of ordained ministry, the PCS does not describe that as a divine institution. The argument for threefold ministry instead follows the reasoning of the ecumenical movement and BEM. The mixture of different languages is not surprising, considering that the PCS also repeats and describes what the churches already have in common. However, it becomes confusing when it is read in the perspective of the traditional dichotomy, looking for issues in the Church that are defined as *iure divino* or not – or, in

⁵³ ARCIC, ‘Authority in the Church I’, p109, §11.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p109, §13.

⁵⁵ See e.g. Dulles, *A Church to Believe In*, for several such attempts.

⁵⁶ PCS §32j: “We hold the ordained ministry of word and sacrament to be an office of divine institution and as such a gift of God to his Church”.

the terminology of Dalferth, *theological* or not. This means that the issue of what is permanently given or necessary in the Church is treated in the PCS, depending on the ordinance, on different levels and with the help of different terminologies. In order to discover whether such an approach is possible it must be asked why and how the *ius divinum* language is problematic, as well as what alternative there may be.

Behind the changed perception of *ius divinum* in modern times, compared with the medieval period, lie a theology and ecclesiology that are more developed. The difference could be described as a change from a theology formulated in abstract ontological and philosophical concepts to a theology formulated using biblical and historical concepts. The theological shift is related to the rediscovery of a sacramental theology beyond the medieval dichotomies, and affirms to a greater extent the incarnational reality and how God acts in history, of which humanity is a part. This has also implications for ecclesiology, which is seen more in relational and fiducial terms than in essential terms or in the search for the fundamentals of the church. A further aspect of this ecclesiological evolution is that the Church is not concerned only with the salvation of individuals, but is primarily an instrument for God's purpose of the completion of creation, including humanity, in the Kingdom of God.⁵⁷ I have referred above to this change as the move from a *fragmented* and *possessive ecclesiology* to a *holistic* and *fiducial ecclesiology*.

In the Reformation conflict there was agreement that ordinances instituted by God are necessary, but disagreement over how something could be regarded as instituted *iure divino*. The reason for this diverse judgement was not only the use of different exegeses, but also different methods for how an ordinance could be discerned and established as instituted by God or not.⁵⁸ In modern discussion about threefold ministry, much of the argumentation is simply a repetition of the medieval use of the *ius divinum* terminology, but without recognising the problems which this concept raises. The isolated focus on ordained ministry in the medieval discussion is discernible in the Lutheran confessions. As in the discussion about *character indelebilis*, references to *ius divinum* occur more frequently in the Lutheran confessions in discussions of ordained ministry than in any other context.⁵⁹

The history of the *ius divinum* language is paralleled in the discussion of the numbers of sacraments. When, as noted in Chapter 11, there was agreement about the general definition of a sacrament, there were different methods for establishing which acts in the Church correspond with this definition and so could be regarded as sacraments. The fathers of the Council of Trent had a more generous approach than the Evangelic reformers, who were more

⁵⁷ Cf. PCS §14ff and Chapter 10.3.

⁵⁸ Dulles, *A Church to Believe In*, p85.

⁵⁹ Piepkorn, 'Ius Divinum and Adiaphoron', p121.

restrictive. The Evangelic reformers asked for a clear institution of the sacraments by Christ, while the Roman party was satisfied with a reference to a more general divine institution. The historical critical method has, however, altered the basis for discussing the issue.

In modern sacramental discussion, it has been common to understand the sacraments in relation to Jesus himself, and the life of the whole Church as a *mysterion* of the eschatological reality of the Kingdom. The sacraments have been described as outpourings from a root sacrament, the Church, and Jesus as the primordial sacrament.⁶⁰ Pannenberg has criticised a tendency in this kind of reasoning, which sees it as sufficient to refer the sacraments to the life of the church. In contrast, he has maintained that Thomas Aquinas was right when he stated that “proof of a special institution of each sacrament is essential, since sacraments impart grace and Christians cannot think that any other than Jesus Christ can do this”.⁶¹ Pannenberg’s point is that it is not possible to avoid the question about an institution of the sacraments, which has to be related to Jesus and his life. At the same time Pannenberg broadens the meaning of ‘institution’:

We do not have to rest on an express saying of Jesus along the lines of the command to baptize or the command to repeat the Supper. Instead, we simply have to show that the Supper and the baptism go back to Jesus inasmuch as their early Christian origins may be understood as a result of data in the history and practices of Jesus in the light of the Easter event.⁶²

Pannenberg emphasises that the idea of divine institution is maintained, but since it is broadened and related to the whole life of Jesus, it changes the prerequisites for the use of the *ius divinum* language (a language Pannenberg does not use himself).⁶³ The Church is seen as the receiver of the sacramental act and not as the creator, although it has contributed to its liturgical shape.⁶⁴ In this relational and receptive approach, there are other sacramental acts that also give participation in the divine mystery of salvation. Indirectly, and through their connection with baptism, this is the case with penance, confirmation and unction, as well as with ordination and marriage.⁶⁵

Another theologian who has discussed *ius divinum* is Avery Dulles. Like Pannenberg and the ecumenical movement, he has done so in an ecclesiological perspective. Dulles notes that, thanks to modern biblical criticism and the development of historical consciousness,⁶⁶ we can no longer think of divine ordinances as distinct from human initiatives, which implies that there

⁶⁰ Cf. Chapter 11.2.

⁶¹ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p341.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 3:p344.

⁶³ In a discussion of the Petrine office he, however, make use of this language; *Ibid.*, 3:p429f.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 3:p344.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 3:p355ff.

⁶⁶ With reference to Lindbeck, ‘Papacy and *Ius Divinum*’.

is a need to understand the issue of the permanency of the Church in new categories. Dulles concludes:

It is important to find ways of expressing that the Church is not its own Lord. Whether we speak of the word of God, the gospel, the law of Christ, or divine institution is probably not a matter of great moment. But there has to be some terminology that allows us to distinguish what the officers of the Church decide as a matter of free discretion and what they hold because fidelity to God's revelation so requires. The traditional *ius divinum* terminology, for both Protestants and [Roman] Catholics, provided ways of making this distinction. Today, we shall doubtless wish to substitute terminology that is less juridical and less anthropomorphic.⁶⁷

Based on the approaches of various modern theologians to *ius divinum*,⁶⁸ Dulles notes that, although none of those is really satisfying as a defence of the notion of *ius divinum*, they can be understood as complementary, and as such as contributing to an answer to how to understand what is permanently given to the Church. In contrast with the medieval approach, and in agreement with ecumenical theology, he begins with ecclesiology and understands the Church as a *sacramentum mundi*, i.e., the universal sacrament of salvation, or the sacrament of Christ in the world. On this basis he notes that what seems to be unchangeable in the church is described in relational rather than essentialist terms.⁶⁹ In Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday and today and forever" (Heb 13:8), the Church has its stable reference point. And it is through its anamnetic life that the Church draws its own members into participation in the mysteries of Jesus' death and resurrection and into a saving relationship with God. This means that the abiding structures of the Church must undergo ceaseless modification, "not in order to weaken or dissolve its bonds with Christ, but precisely in order to keep them intact".⁷⁰ In this way Dulles answers the demand of Pannenberg that the emergence of the sacraments in the life of the Church be related to Jesus himself.

On this ecclesiological basis, Dulles consider ecclesiological structures under four general headings, or four concentric circles, each relating in different ways to *ius divinum* and to the theories of the modern theologians investigated earlier in his essay. The strength of Dulles' approach is that it broadens the discussion, from an isolated focus on ordained ministry and the essentials of the church, to an ecclesiological and relational perspective focused on the structure or *ordo* of the life of the whole Church, not only on the hierarchical structure. This ecclesiological perspective is the same as

⁶⁷ Dulles, *A Church to Believe In*, p93f.

⁶⁸ Dulles, *A Church to Believe In*. Dulles describes theories of Thomas, Luther, Calvin, Schlink, Rahner, Küng, Suarez, Schillebeeckx, Lindbeck and others.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p94f.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p95.

found in the PCS, thus making Dulles' approach useful in handling the critique in the Porvoo debate.

With reference to Schlink, Dulles describes the first circle as consisting of the four basic structural elements of baptism, eucharist, ordination and penance, "representing Christ's irrevocable gift to his church".⁷¹ Dulles notes that there is no sharp line between the first and "inmost circle of sacramental structures which the New Testament ascribes to the founding action of Jesus himself",⁷² and the second circle.

In the second circle Dulles places institutional features of the church, which first clearly appeared as distinct entities in the years following the apostolic age, but which could "be traced back to a biblical basis and, moreover, were found to be expressive of the very nature of the Church".⁷³ Dulles states that those ordinances are better described with the help of the developmental theories of Rahner and Carl Peter,⁷⁴ rather than with the static theory of tradition found in Neo-Scholasticism. Dulles notes that the strongest objections against the developmental approach would be that the Church existed for a short period without these structures; and he asks rhetorically, how those structures could be 'essential' if they had not always been there. Dulles defends the theory using the analogy of biological growth, and states that "the development might be irreversible insofar as the Church can never return to its primitive state".⁷⁵ A further argument for the developmental approach is that the majority of Christian traditions accept the creeds of the early church and the canon of Scripture formulated in the early centuries, even though these norms are post-apostolic, because:

The church in later ages finds that these doctrinal norms enable it to express and maintain the apostolic faith. So likewise we may suppose that certain sacramental and ministerial structures which cannot themselves be surely traced back to the apostolic generation may nonetheless be essential to the Church in later ages.⁷⁶

Like Pannenberg, Dulles states that it is on this "distance" (or, using Pannenberg's word, "indirectly") that the structures of the three sacraments, or sacramental acts, not listed in the first circle, are placed: confirmation, marriage, and the anointing of the sick. Although all three can be traced back to the New Testament, they are not described there as directly instituted by Jesus.

⁷¹ Ibid., p96.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., p97.

⁷⁴ Rahner, *Theological Investigations. Vol. 5, Later Writings*, p219ff; Peter, 'Dimensions of Jus Divinum in Roman Catholic Theology'.

⁷⁵ Dulles, *A Church to Believe In*, p97.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

The third circle represents a different issue. In reference to Johannes Neumann and Schillebeeckx, Dulles asks whether there might be temporary features in the church that are nevertheless willed by Jesus and inspired by the Holy Spirit. If it is commonly accepted that God is at work in history and speaks to the Church through time, then it is also possible that the introduction of new forms and the abrogation of old forms might be divine imperatives for the church. Dulles exemplifies this point by noting that in modern times, the breakthrough development of the rights of the individual to participate in the governing process of the state has also influenced the Church to adopt less juridical and more consensual forms of leadership that was the case earlier in the Church's history. At the same time this seems to fit what the Church is by nature and by God's intention; an interpersonal communion established through the Holy Spirit. Another example is the abandonment of an identification of the Church with an one-dimensional understanding of itself as a hierarchical and juridical structure. Yet, Dulles notes, there are many theologians who do emphasise the need for a hierarchical structure in the Church, and he asks: "Do we have any criteria for distinguishing between the second and third circle just described?"⁷⁷ Questions belonging to the third circle, according to Dulles, are the ordination of women and the status and form of the Petrine office. Both are questions that have not so far been mutually resolved among the churches.

The fourth circle in Dulles' model concerns structures in the Church that might be seen as operational or 'ad hoc'. Those structures are issues about which the Church has to make certain provisional decisions, but that are neither contrary to God's will, nor expressly required by it.⁷⁸ For example, why one hymn is preferred over another and included in the hymnal, even though both express the faith of the Church.

Dulles summarises the argument by saying that, although there are apparently weaknesses with the *ius divinum* terminology, which tends to separate divine and human activity too sharply, the Church still needs to discern what is permanently given in it; and whatever terminology is used, it is necessary to differentiate between the biblical and the non-biblical, the apostolic and the post-apostolic, the reversible and the irreversible.⁷⁹

The strength of Dulles' description is its ecclesiological starting point. This relational ecclesiology makes space for a more developmental and dynamic understanding of the permanent characteristics of the church, and is open to the actual historical development of the Church and the insights from sociology about institutional development in general.⁸⁰ Another strength is that it loosens the polarised and absolute dichotomy between *ius*

⁷⁷ Ibid., p99f.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p100.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p102.

⁸⁰ See e.g. Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*, p100 and chapter 9.3.

divinum and *ius humanum*. Dulles' model is fruitful as a way to deal with the issue of *ius divinum*, and as a description of how BEM, the ecumenical dialogues in general, and the PCS have related to *ius divinum* and to what is permanently given in the church.

However, in contrast to the *ius divinum* language, in the medieval discussion there were already alternatives to this dichotomy, although the content of the post-Reformation controversial theology became more polarised. This is demonstrated by the three traditions of the Porvoo Churches concerning episcopal succession, and in the decrees of the Council of Trent.

In the Swedish Church Order of 1571, Archbishop Laurentius Petri states that episcopacy is a gift of the Holy Spirit, which shall remain "as long as the world stands".⁸¹ The Church Order is still one of the fundamental texts of the CoS,⁸² and it has never been officially abrogated in the ELCF since 1809, when Sweden and Finland were separated. The tension between the Swedish and the German understandings is demonstrated by the answer of the Swedish Bishops' Conference to the CoE in 1922. It stated that episcopal succession, while seen as a gift of the Holy Spirit and far more than only an honoured tradition, could not be seen as a condition for church fellowship:

Our Church cannot recognize any essential difference, *de jure divino*, of aim and authority between the two or three orders into which the ministry of grace may have been divided, *jure humano*, for the benefit and convenience of the Church. ... That doctrine in no wise makes our Church indifferent to the organization and the forms of ministry which the cravings and experiences of the Christian community have produced under the guidance of the Spirit in the course of history. We do not only regard the peculiar forms and traditions of our Church with the reverence due to a venerable legacy from the past, but we realize in them the blessings from the God of history accorded to us.⁸³

The statement of the Swedish episcopate may be regarded, not so much as a carefully-crafted doctrinal explanation, but as a historically and practically motivated position at the time, maintaining the tension between loyalty to the theological tradition of their own church and loyalty to an emerging Lutheran fellowship of the time.⁸⁴ In practice, however, the bishops of the CoS have emphasised the importance of episcopal succession and have actively introduced it in a number of churches in Europe, Asia and Africa.⁸⁵ In modern times it has also been stated in the German Lutheran-Roman Catholic

⁸¹ Petri, 'CO 1571', 160f.

⁸² Formally, the CoS does not have confessional texts but fundamental texts that express the confession of the church. The provincial council of Uppsala in 1593 adopted the CO1571 together with the CA *invariata* as fundamental texts.

⁸³ CoS, the Bishops' Conference, 'To the Conference of Bishops in the Anglican Communion', p375f.

⁸⁴ Cf. Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*, p213f, 228f.

⁸⁵ See e.g. Furberg, *Ett ekumeniskt tecken*.

dialogue that “the Lutheran churches can recognise the role of the Spirit in the development of the Threefold ministry”.⁸⁶ It seems that this recognition did not leave any traces in the Protestant critique of the PCS, which followed their position taken in Leuenberg and Meissen.

Contrary to the controversial theology in the post-Reformation era, the positions of the fathers of the Council of Trent were not as polarising as later perceived. At the council there were extended discussions about whether or not the origin of the threefold ministry was *ius divinum*;⁸⁷ but in the end the council expressed itself on the issue more circumspectly: it speaks about “through divine dispensation” (*divina ordinatione*) and not “divine institution” (*divina institutione*).⁸⁸ Vatican II describes the tripartite division of the ministry even more modestly as being “from ancient times” (*ab antiquo*).⁸⁹ Admittedly, Lumen Gentium §20 states that “the bishops have by divine institution (*ex divina institutione*) taken the place of the apostles as pastors of the church”. This sentence, however, is explained in §28: “the divinely instituted ecclesiastical ministry is exercised in different degrees by those who even from ancient times (*ab antiquo*) have been called bishops, priests and deacons”. In the end neither Trent nor Vatican II made use of the *ius divinum* terminology in its description of the ordering of ordained ministry.⁹⁰

The replacement of the *ius divinum* language with a *developmental* approach is important for the understanding of apostolic succession. The developmental approach to the ordained ministry and the sacraments regards as problematic an isolated treatment of ordained ministry and its development into three forms. Such an isolated treatment, as in the *ius divinum* language, does not sufficiently consider the historical reality of the church. The threefold ministry did not develop in isolation, but as a part of a broader ecclesial reality. That is the insight of the notion of *substantive apostolicity*, which not only concerns ordain ministry, but also *credo*, *canon* and the whole life of the *community* of which the threefold ministry is a part. This understanding of apostolicity is emphasised in the PCS with a quote from BEM describing the “permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles”.⁹¹

Since this understanding does not correspond well with the Protestant critique based on the dichotomy of ‘theological’ and ‘functional’, with the *ius divinum* terminology in the background, the background to the Protestant critique needs to be discussed before I turn to the developmental explanation of threefold ministry in BEM and the PCS.

⁸⁶ Lehmann and Pannenberg, *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era*, p155f.

⁸⁷ McDonnell, ‘Ways of Validating Ministry’, p239ff.

⁸⁸ DzH 1776.

⁸⁹ RCC, ‘Lumen Gentium’, p39f, §28.

⁹⁰ See also; LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p264, §48.

⁹¹ PCS §36, with a quote from BEM M§34.

13.3. The background to the Protestant critique

The Protestant problem with episcopacy and threefold ministry is complex. On the one hand it is stated that there is no objection in principle to episcopacy – or even, in the words of the later LRCJC document *From Conflict to Communion*, that bishops as overseers are necessary.⁹² On the other hand, and in contrast to BEM and the PCS, *episcopé* and episcopacy are separated, with the consequence that the necessary *episcopé* is seen as possibly exercised in various forms, including personal and synodical.⁹³ Behind the Protestant critique of threefold ministry is the presbyteral conception of the ordained ministry, the issue about *ius divinum*, and the ecclesiology of fundamentals. This ecclesiology was formulated in Leuenberg and Meissen, and differs from the perspective in the PCS. The difference relates to questions of authority. While oversight and ministerial structures are peripheral to unity according to Leuenberg, they are constitutive for the particular as well as for the universal Church in the PCS.⁹⁴ Since the establishing of the Leuenberg Fellowship, there has been a development towards a more elaborated ecclesiology.⁹⁵ This development witnesses to the general ecumenical and ecclesiological evolution and to a developed understanding of both apostolicity and catholicity, not least in its sense of universality. Protestant ecclesiological development, however, has not yet resolved the decisive issues of threefold ministry and episcopal succession.

Behind the Protestant critique and important for the discussion of threefold ministry, are the historical reasons for why the German Evangelic churches lost episcopal order. In the aftermath of the Reformation, the German Evangelic churches stood without an episcopal order. That outcome was not according to the will of the reformers, whose intention was not to split the Church, and who considered the order of the Church to be episcopal and wanted to retain it.⁹⁶ As we know, and due to many non-doctrinal factors – political, economic and social – the course of history followed a different route. In a description of the division of the Church in Germany in the 16th century, three aspects need to be kept in mind: first, the confusion of secular and ecclesial power as the background to the calls for reform; secondly, the historical development that turned against the expressed will of the Evangelic reformers, and their practical measures to maintain the church's order and unity; thirdly, when maintaining this order was not possible, mainly for political reasons, the reformers saw it as theologically possible to ordain their

⁹² LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*, p64, §172.

⁹³ E.g. Dalferth, 'Ministry and the Office of Bishop', p38f; LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*, p68, §184 which stands in contrast to §172.

⁹⁴ See Chapter 10.2. and Repo, 'Apostolic Faith and Episcopal Ministry', p38, note 21.

⁹⁵ See; Leuenberger Kirchengemeinschaft, 'Die Kirche Jesu Christi'.

⁹⁶ Apology 14.

own priests and superintendents.⁹⁷ The theological validity of doing so was based on the medieval presbyteral understanding of ordained ministry.⁹⁸

In CA §28 the reformers criticise the worldly power of the bishops and insist that it is not part of their churchly office. Contrary to the critique in CA 28, which is directed at the bishops' worldly power, the confusion of powers was not one-sided: it worked in both directions, and this would have devastating consequences for the post-Reformation churches. In the German-Roman Empire, ecclesiastical power was linked with political power. In the secular territories – those not ruled by a bishop – the Church was governed by secular authorities such as princes and city councils. This meant that visitations, ecclesiastical patronage, monastic reforms and many other activities were carried out to a great extent by secular authorities, not by bishops.⁹⁹ Dorothea Wendebourg has described the situation as follows:

The Church of the Empire was *de facto* a church run by the princes. That was true of the secular territories, but was also true in a specific and in some ways heightened manner in the ecclesiastical territories, insofar as the bishops were only able to enforce their authority here because of their position as territorial rulers.¹⁰⁰

In contrast with the Nordic and British countries, there were no autonomous ecclesial structures in Germany, no synods, and no real Primates. As spiritual princes, the German bishops came together in the *Reichstag* as the only official 'ecclesial' body. This is why Luther was examined in front of the *Reichstag* in Worms, and not primarily by ecclesial authorities.¹⁰¹ This is important background to the outcome of the Reformation conflict in the German territories as opposed to the rest of Northern Europe.

At the heart of the Evangelic reformers' critique of the episcopacy of their time was this confusion of powers. Since they could not recognise the episcopal office of the early church in medieval monarchical episcopacy, they wanted to restore episcopal ministry as a truly pastoral office. In the early church the bishop was seen to be responsible for one parish and not for an area of many parishes. In the course of history the responsibility of the bishop was taken over in practice by the parish priest as the responsibilities of the bishop grew. Important to the reformers' critique was the presbyteral conception of ordained ministry and its individualised conception of office as a person with a particular *potestas*. The reformers protested against that concept, yet it was formed by it, and in practice it was perpetuated in the future Reformation churches, particularly in the Evangelic, Roman, and Reformed churches, but to a less degree in the Anglican.

⁹⁷ See e.g. Meyer, "'Unity in Diversity' – A Concept in Crisis", p54.

⁹⁸ See Chapter 9.3.4.

⁹⁹ Wendebourg, 'The Reformation in Germany', p50.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Kretschmar, *Das bischöfliche Amt*, p310f.

Despite their critique of medieval episcopacy and its confusion of powers, the reformers affirmed the value of episcopacy as a ministry beyond parish level. In the Articles of Smalcald, Luther stated:

The Church can never be better governed and preserved than if we all live under one head, Christ, and all the bishops equal in office (although they be unequal in gifts), be diligently joined in unity of doctrine, faith, Sacraments, prayer, and works of love, etc., as Jerome writes that the priests at Alexandria together and in common governed the churches, as did also the apostles, and afterwards all bishops throughout all Christendom.¹⁰²

And in the Apology, Article 14, Melancthon stated:

We have often affirmed that it is our greatest wish to maintain the structures and orders of the Church, even though they have been created by human authority. For we know that the structure of the Church was established by the Fathers in the form laid down in the ancient canons with good and beneficial intentions.¹⁰³

The origin of episcopacy is argued as *ius humanum*. At the same time, in CA 28's critique of the worldly power of the bishops, it is stated that the spiritual power is given the bishop *iure divino*.¹⁰⁴ That CA deals with episcopacy in a particular section and affirms its divine right to exercise jurisdiction means that the CA recognises the bishop a *potestas jurisdictionis* and, considering the bishop's teaching responsibility, a *potestas magisteri*, which is not found in the lower levels of ordained ministry. CA does not reflect upon the general, or common, priesthood of the church, nor does it state anything about a sharing of power between ordained ministers and laypeople.

When it became clear to the Evangelic reformers that the bishops in the Roman-German Empire – unlike bishops in Sweden, England and Prussia¹⁰⁵ – refused to ordain, or were hindered from ordaining, ministers for parishes of the Evangelic movement, they finally and reluctantly decided to do so

¹⁰² Smalcaldic Articles, part 2, article 4.

¹⁰³ Apology 14.

¹⁰⁴ This tension between the description in Apology 14 and in CA 28 concerning episcopacy as *ius humanum* and *ius divinum* is actually what Dalferth criticised in the PCS. Dalferth stated that there is a contradiction when the PCS describes the institution of threefold ministry functionally – i.e., *ius humanum* – but the *episcopé* function of the bishop as theologically necessary – i.e., *ius divinum*. Dalferth, 'Ministry and the Office of Bishop', p31f. It seems that the PCS is closer to the perspective of the Lutheran confessions than Dalferth, although ecclesologically the PCS has developed the issue beyond the *ius divinum* terminology and reconciled the tension between the definitions of Apology 14 and CA 28. I will come back to the developmental understanding in the PCS in Chapter 13.4. below.

¹⁰⁵ Some bishops in Prussia did follow Luther, among them Bishop Georg von Polenz of Samland. Those were, however, outside of the Roman-German Empire; Wendebourg, 'The Reformation in Germany', p56.

themselves after 1525.¹⁰⁶ Theologically the decision was based on the presbyteral conception of ordained ministry in Peter Lombard's influential *Sentences*,¹⁰⁷ on the witness of Jerome's description of the church in Alexandria. Melancthon stated that, "since the distinction in rank between bishop and pastor is not by divine right [*iure divino*], it is clear that an ordination performed by a pastor in his own church is valid by divine right".¹⁰⁸ Likewise, for Luther there was no doubt on historical grounds that, in respect of the succession of ordained ministers, the Evangelic movement in Germany acted according to a tradition going back to apostolic times.¹⁰⁹

Nevertheless, both before and after 1535 the reformers strove to retain episcopal order and the old episcopal sees and dioceses. Their endeavours were that the reformed part of the Church should be governed by bishops in a truly pastoral sense, free from the political system. The integration between secular and ecclesial power was, however, so set in stone that it was not possible to alter the confusion of power, and the Emperor was not ready to accept a shift in the political system. He worked against such a change, and bishops, such as the archbishop of Cologne, was kept in line by military means and hindered from answering the call of the reformers.¹¹⁰ Despite several attempts, the German reformers did not succeed in retaining episcopal order and the old diocesan organisation.

Parallel with the attempts to retain unity with medieval episcopacy, an office of superintendents emerged among the German Evangelic parishes. The institution of the superintendents was due to an acute need for visitation in the parishes. The measure was taken based on the presbyteral conception of ordained ministry; and it demonstrates the reformers' emphasis on the need for overseers. In 1535 Melancthon wrote that "in the church rulers are necessary, who will examine and ordain those who are called to ecclesial office, church law observes and exercises oversight upon the teaching of the priests. And if there were no bishops, one would nevertheless have to create them."¹¹¹

Contrary to what often is assumed, the introduction of superintendents, using that title, was not a rejection of episcopal order, but in fact a recognition of its value. The term 'superintendent', which of course is only the Latin word for the Greek *episcopos*, was chosen in order to affirm the value of the already-existing bishops. In that way the possibility was kept open of integrating the superintendents under the authority of the local bishop if, or when, the bishop became open to the reform of his office. In a few cases that

¹⁰⁶ Wendebourg, 'The One Ministry of the One Church', p317, note72; cf. LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*, p32, 62, §67, 167.

¹⁰⁷ Osborne, *Priesthood*, p204; LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*, p64, §171.

¹⁰⁸ Quote from USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p 50, §178, note 323.

¹⁰⁹ Leppin, 'Zwischen Notfall und theologischen Prinzip', p385.

¹¹⁰ Wendebourg, 'The Reformation in Germany', p55ff.

¹¹¹ Quoted from LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*, p64, §172.

actually happened; but due to political and economic forces they did not last for long.¹¹² Wendebourg has summarised the outcome of the German Reformation as follows:

There was no possibility of a protestant episcopate, since it would not be anchored in the constitution of the Empire, and that the assumption of episcopal power by the princes, in the long term and not just temporarily, was unavoidable. The form of the government of the Church by the princes which was established in the protestant territories represented the opposite, mirror image of the political episcopate of the Empire and thereby reflected the same linkage of political and ecclesiastical order which it was only possible to overcome after the end of the Empire.¹¹³

Contrary to the reformers' intention that the princes should be temporary *emergency bishops*, it became a permanent feature of the organisation of the German Lutheran churches and in practice was made the norm. Attempts to introduce an episcopal order in the church, such as by Fredrik Wilhelm IV of Prussia in the 1840s, was actually opposed by German Lutheran theologians.¹¹⁴ Harding Meyer has criticised such an approach, and has said of the princes as emergency bishops that "no normativity must ever be assigned to this *de facto* failure".¹¹⁵

When the Empire broke up at the beginning of the 19th century, this became the starting point for a reform of the episcopal office of the RCC.¹¹⁶ In the German Evangelic churches the system remained for another century, until the collapse of the monarchies during World War I.¹¹⁷ After World War I episcopal ministry was re-introduced in the German Landeskirchen on a broad scale, but in different forms. Those bishops or superintendents were not ordained in *episcopal succession* – a point that so far has been resisted by the German Landeskirchen, although *apostolic succession* has been recently addressed in several German ecumenical projects.¹¹⁸

Despite the history of the German Reformation, which in itself is a strong argument for re-introduction of the episcopal ministry, those churches continue to emphasise the principle of the flexibility of the exercise of *episcopé* as formulated in *Leuenberg* and *Meissen*.¹¹⁹ Behind this view is a different ecclesiology and concept of unity than that which is used in the PCS, and the continuing emphasis on episcopacy as necessary only if it is defined as *iure divino*. While this is a repeat of the medieval arguments, the ecumenical

¹¹² Wendebourg, 'The Reformation in Germany', p62.

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Stolt, *Svenska biskopsvigningar*, p92.

¹¹⁵ Meyer, "'Unity in Diversity' – A Concept in Crisis", p54.

¹¹⁶ Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p64f.

¹¹⁷ Wendebourg, 'The Reformation in Germany', p65f.

¹¹⁸ See particular the three volumes of Schneider, Wenz, and Ökumenischer Arbeitskreis evangelischer und katholischer Theologen, *Das kirchliche Amt in apostolischer Nachfolge*.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Chapter 6.2. and Wendebourg, 'The Reformation in Germany', p66.

movement has abandoned the *ius divinum* dichotomy and developed their understanding of both ecclesiology and threefold ministry.

Considering the new political situation, and the fact that neither the RC nor the Evangelic churches in Germany are part of an imperial political system, the possibility of restoring the episcopal ministry as a truly pastoral ministry in line with the wishes of the Evangelic reformers is obvious. The description of episcopacy in the PCS has no other intention than to describe such a pastoral ministry, serving the unity of the church. The same is true for episcopacy as described in *Lumen Gentium* and in ARCIC. Apart from the position of some CoE bishops in the House of Lords (26 diocesan bishops), where they exercise only minor political influence in practice, the bishops of the Porvoo churches have no worldly power. The same is true for the RC bishops, with the Pope as head of the Vatican State being a possible exception.

There are also other reasons for a possible restoration of episcopacy in the Lutheran churches of VELKD. The reformers wanted to retain episcopal order, and referred to the apparently normative nature of episcopacy as a “good and useful order” given by the early church. Admittedly, they did not see it as *iure divino*; but that is not claimed by other churches either. Considering the *ad fontes* intention of the reformers and the normative position of the early church for the reformers, this appreciation is a beacon for the Evangelic churches of today. The loss of the episcopal order was *de facto* a failure that resulted in the emergency solution of the Prince as *summus episcopus* becoming permanent.

The rejection of the *ius divinum* language in modern theology changes the absolute character of the reformers’ judgement of episcopal ministry as *ius humanum*. The question of the institution of ordained ministry and its threefold shape may instead be treated in a more historically integrated way, which witnesses to a more elaborated ecclesiology based on biblical and patristic sources, rather than on fragmented medieval ecclesiology. Such an ecclesiology will better express the Church as a mystery and sign in the world. Further, the reason that the superintendents were not called ‘bishops’ was that it kept the way open for them to be integrated into the dioceses and placed under the authority of the bishops. This means that it would be consistent with the intention of the Evangelic reformers if the German Evangelic Lutheran churches (VELKD) accepted the episcopate, and had their superintendents ordained by, or together with, bishops from the Porvoo churches, and became part of the Porvoo Communion.

A re-introduction and restoration of episcopal order in the German Lutheran churches is supported by the LRCJC. It is stated in *The Ministry in the Church* that “Lutherans have confessionally and historically recognized that

the historic episcopate is a valuable symbol of unity and continuity in the Church".¹²⁰ Likewise, the USA/LRCD states:

Lutherans and [Roman] Catholics affirm together that the realization of koinonia in the primary regional community is presided over by an ordained minister, called a bishop. Lutherans and [Roman] Catholics agree that the bishop exercises a priesthood of ministry of word and sacrament also shared in by the priest or pastor. Episcopal ministry finds its centre in word, sacrament, and pastoral leadership. This ministry serves the unity of the church, both within the regional community and in the relation of this regional community with the church of all times and places.¹²¹

Another argument for the reintroduction of episcopacy in the German Lutheran churches is of a different kind. According to the PCS one of the driving forces behind the need for visible unity was that the Porvoo Churches have a "common mission" in Northern Europe,¹²² and "face a common challenge in God's mission to the people of our nations and continent".¹²³ Because of this common mission and opportunity, there is a need for a "ministry of co-ordination",¹²⁴ that functions as a "bond of communion".¹²⁵ Considering the increasing globalisation, this need has not decreased; and one might ask the German churches whether it is not time to adopt episcopal order in succession "as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it".¹²⁶ This need has been described in the USA/LRCD as Lutheran churches being "increasingly sensitive to the shortcomings of their structures for teaching and mission in a worldwide ministry".¹²⁷

In her description of the German Reformation, Wendebourg did not come to the same conclusion as I do. Rather, she questioned the PCS's reasoning in favour of the threefold ministry, based only on its emergence in the early church (*ab antiquo*).¹²⁸ With this said as a background to the protestant critique, the question remains: how does the PCS argue for the threefold ministry.

¹²⁰ LRCJC, 'The Ministry in the Church (1981)', §65.

¹²¹ USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p17, §63; The same is stated in LRCJC, *The Apostolicity of the Church*, p126ff, §279ff.; Later quoted in LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*, p68, §184.

¹²² PCS §10-13 under the rubric "Our Common Mission Today".

¹²³ PCS §6; see further in Chapter 16.2.1.

¹²⁴ PCS §42.

¹²⁵ PCS §20, 24.

¹²⁶ PCS §32j and BEM M§22.

¹²⁷ USA/LRCD, *Teaching Authority & Infallibility in the Church*, p29, §39, p66f, §19f.

¹²⁸ Wendebourg, 'The One Ministry of the One Church', p303.

13.4. Threefold ministry in the PCS

The PCS's approach to the threefold ministry is more a reference to an already-established consensus in earlier documents than an independent argument. Behind its reasoning is the wider ecumenical movement, and particularly BEM. In its understanding of the institution of ordained ministry and its threefold organisation, BEM is an expression of the developmental approach. As noted in Chapter 2.3.2, BEM establishes that the New Testament describes different models of ministry, and that:

As the Holy Spirit continued to lead the Church in life, worship and mission, certain elements from this early variety were further developed and became settled into a more universal pattern of ministry. During the second and third centuries, a threefold pattern of bishop, presbyter and deacon became established as the pattern of ordained ministry throughout the Church.¹²⁹

BEM expresses here what Malta described when it stated that “we have the *ius divinum* always only as mediated through particular historical forms. These mediating forms must be understood not only as the product of a sociological process of growth but, because of the pneumatic nature of the church, they can be experienced also as a fruit of the Spirit.”¹³⁰

What Malta describes, and BEM expresses, is that historically the development of ordained ministry did not occur in isolation, but in relation to the society in which the Church existed and guided by the Holy Spirit. Crucial to this development was the need to protect the Church from deviation and false teachings, and the need for new leaders to follow the apostles.¹³¹ The Gnostic teachings forced the Church to develop necessary means to protect its identity: the canon of Sacred Scripture, the Creed, and the threefold ministry.¹³² Together with the communion of the church, the Creed and the threefold ministry constitute the content of *substantive apostolicity* as a living dynamic reality.¹³³ The treatment of the emergence of threefold ministry as a part and an expression of this dynamic reality reveals a weakness in much of the discussion about threefold ministry. That weakness could be described as a one-dimensional treatment of the issue of the form of ordained ministry. This one-dimensional weakness is a result of a fragmented ecclesiology and an individualised notion of ordained ministry, as well as a non-historical understanding of the emergence of the threefold ministry as a juridical institution and not as an integral part of the growth and development of the early post-apostolic church.

¹²⁹ BEM, M§19.

¹³⁰ LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p175, §31; Cf. LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p263, §45.

¹³¹ See further Chapter 15.2 and Chapter 9.3.

¹³² Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*; Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*.

¹³³ See further in Chapter 15.

This one dimensional approach to the issue is disguised by a paradox in the discussion about the necessity of the threefold ministry and its relation to the apostolicity of the church. While most churches have no problem seeing the Creed and the scriptural canon of the Church as being fruits of the Holy Spirit, the threefold ministry has been regularly questioned in the post-Reformation period. This stands in contrast to the fact that it was the very bishops in the rejected threefold ministry who once discerned and determined the canon. Or, put the other way round: if the canon is accepted, it means that the authority and thus the authenticity of the bishops who once determined the canon are recognised, at least implicitly, as both are expressions of the development of the early church.

In BEM, as in the PCS, the history of the Church is given a normative authority and the threefold differentiation in the early church of the ordained ministry instituted by God is seen as normative for the continuing church.¹³⁴ However, this is not established in an absolute manner. Rather, through their arguments BEM, the PCS, and Vatican II – and in fact the council of Trent as well – avoid, in the words of BEM, attributing “particular forms of the ordained ministry directly to the will and institution of Jesus Christ”.¹³⁵ Behind this comment is the earlier use of *ius divinum* terminology and a developed knowledge of the history of the Church and the threefold ministry. On the basis of this knowledge, BEM affirms that, although there is a historical plurality of ministry in the Church, and that other forms of ministry have also been blessed by the Holy Spirit:

Nevertheless, the threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as means for achieving it. Historically, it is true to say, the threefold ministry became the generally accepted pattern in the Church of the early centuries and is still retained today by many churches. In the fulfilment of their mission and service the churches need people who in different ways express and perform the tasks of the ordained ministry in its diaconal, presbyteral and episcopal aspects and functions.¹³⁶

Through this argument, BEM does not say that other forms of ordained ministry are without value or validity; it says only that the threefold form, as

¹³⁴ Cf. Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p379f. Pannenberg states that “theological validation of the development of the episcopate and its lasting normative significance in the church rest on the fact that what was once the apostolic responsibility for keeping the churches in the faith of the apostolic gospel could now be discharged in this manner. ... In virtue of its function, however, episcopacy in the early church did not just express a form of ‘order’ that is optional and theologically neutral and hence simply one among others. Instead, by uniting church leadership and teaching, it must be seen to have established itself as the church’s classical solution to the problem of preserving the churches in the faith of the apostolic gospel and hence also in fulfilment of the commission given by the risen Lord.”

¹³⁵ Cf. BEM M§11 (commentary).

¹³⁶ BEM M§22.

“generally accepted in the early church” is given a special status and seen as the norm for the churches to adopt as an expression of, and a means to achieve the required unity.

It is important to note that BEM’s defence of the threefold ministry does not merely refer to the early church as an arbitrary historical development. The development of the threefold ministry is seen as a pneumatic process that corresponds with the three basic dimensions and functions of the mission and service of the church.¹³⁷ According to BEM, the missionary nature of the church, which to its nature is *diaconal*, *liturgical* and a *witness*, shapes the threefold ministry as an expression of this nature and of the pneumatic character of the church. BEM does not say that the threefold ministry is or was the only possible form; rather, due to the pneumatic nature of the Church and how the threefold ministry developed as a gift of the Holy Spirit, BEM understands the threefold ministry as an expression of and as means for the unity of the church. According to BEM, such a ministry for the unity of the church is necessary.¹³⁸

The reasoning in BEM underlies the set of arguments in the PCS, which consists partly of formulations from BEM – but with one important difference: all of the Porvoo churches were already episcopal. Therefore, the focus of the PCS is not primarily on the arguments for or against the necessity of episcopal ministry, but on solving the problem of episcopal succession. Essentially, the PCS follows the developmental approach described in BEM, and says:

[The] basic oneness of the ordained ministry is expressed in the service of word and sacrament. In the life of the Church, this unity has taken a differentiated form. The threefold ministry of bishop, priest and deacon became the general pattern in the Church of the early centuries and is still retained by many churches, though often in partial form. ‘The threefold ministry of bishop, presbyter and deacon may serve today as an expression of the unity we seek and also as a means for achieving it.’¹³⁹

We believe that a ministry of pastoral oversight (episcopate), exercised in personal, collegial and communal ways, is necessary as witness to and safeguard of the unity and apostolicity of the Church. Further, we retain and employ the episcopal office as a sign of our intention, under God, to ensure the continuity of the Church in apostolic life and witness. For these reasons, all our churches have a personally exercised episcopal office.¹⁴⁰

The PCS’s reasoning that episcopacy and threefold ministry are necessary is based on three arguments: 1. It became the general pattern in the early church (*ab antiquo*). 2. An *episcopé* exercised in personal (i.e., by a bishop), collegial, and communal ways is necessary to safeguard the unity and apos-

¹³⁷ BEM M§22.

¹³⁸ BEM M§23.

¹³⁹ PCS §32j.

¹⁴⁰ PCS §32k.

tolicity of the Church and to ensure coordination. 3. The threefold ministry is used by the PCS as an expression and means for the unity of the church. Behind those three arguments is the fact that all the Porvoo churches were already, and have always been, episcopally ordered,¹⁴¹ and the importance of pneumatology for ecclesiology in the PCS,¹⁴² which I will discuss in due course.

13.5. The threefold ministry as norm

Seen as necessary, but not in the medieval ontological sense, episcopacy and episcopal succession are defined in the PCS as normative for the Porvoo churches. Since this understanding describes how the Porvoo churches understand the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ in principle, it follows that in the Porvoo perspective, episcopal succession is also regarded as normative in relation to other churches. Given that all the Porvoo churches were already episcopal, the PCS would not have been controversial, had it not been for the principal question of episcopacy as instituted *iure divino* or otherwise, and the question whether episcopal succession is necessary for the validity of the episcopal office. Both of those questions constituted important bases for the interpretations and critiques of the PCS in the Porvoo debate.

While the PCS presents an ecclesiological solution to the longstanding problem of episcopal succession, it was, as demonstrated in Part II, common in the Protestant position to interpret the Porvoo solution without reference to its ecclesiological basis. The critics noticed that the PCS speaks of a mutual recognition of the churches and their episcopal ministries as apostolic, but without seeing its ecclesiology as the necessary prerequisite. This is revealed by those Porvoo churches that have approved not only the PCS, but also Leuenberg.¹⁴³

As described in Chapter 7.2, Olav Fykse Tveit argued why it was thought possible for the CoN to approve Leuenberg in 1999, three years after she had approved the PCS. He said:

1. The CoN – and other churches sharing the apostolic tradition in Word and Sacraments – are apostolic churches prior to the joint consecrations of bishops (with Anglicans). 2. The episcopal succession is accepted as a sign of continuity and unity of the apostolic Church. By intention and by practice it existed in our church before the signing of the Porvoo agreement. It should be practiced in a more comprehensive, ecumenically significant and theologically reflected way. 3. Whether a pastor was legitimately ordained before

¹⁴¹ PCS §44: "The ministry of oversight is exercised personally, collegially and communally".

¹⁴² PCS e.g. §§19, 38, 41, 47, 48.

¹⁴³ Several of the Porvoo churches have approved Leuenberg as well: ELCD, CoN and EELC.

Anglican bishops participated in the ordination of bishops, is regarded as a question that is not relevant to the legitimacy of the pastor.¹⁴⁴

For several reasons this line of argument does not do the PCS justice.

1. Ecclesiology: Fykse Tveit replaces the PCS's concept of unity with Leuenberg's understanding of the same matter. He does not adequately consider the ecclesiological perspective in the PCS and its vital importance for the Porvoo solution. This means, as pointed out at the beginning of this chapter, that the longstanding problem to be solved,¹⁴⁵ is in fact reduced to nothing, and that the CoN receives the results of the PCS but neglects its obligatory prerequisites and potentialities. The CoN is not alone in this omission, but it is, more or less, common to all the Porvoo churches. I will come back to the issue of implementation in Chapter 16. The Norwegian interpretation of the PCS, which was common in the Porvoo debate,¹⁴⁶ does not consider that the precondition for the Porvoo solution, and for the mutual recognition of ordained ministry, is the mutual renewal into the deepened ecclesiology of the PCS. In the words of the two chairmen (often referred to in this thesis), "in seeking to unlock our churches from limited and negative perceptions" the PCS "spells out a deeper understanding of apostolicity, of episcopal office, and of historic succession as 'sign'".¹⁴⁷

2. Pipeline succession: Because the Porvoo ecclesiology and its importance for the Porvoo solution is not considered, episcopal succession is perceived in a narrow sense, and the issue of the validity of the ordained ministry in the CoN is focused on – a perspective from which, at the same time, she distances herself. However, that is not the approach of the PCS, but the perspective the PCS claims to have overcome.

3. Sign and instrument: Episcopal succession is not regarded only as a sign in the PCS, but as a sign and instrument – i.e., as an effective sacramental sign that effects what it signifies. §48 of the PCS states that the sign of ordination in episcopal succession is effective in four ways that should be understood as integral to the ecclesiology of the Church as God's instrument for his Kingdom. The perspective of Fykse Tveit is "all or nothing", while the PCS perspective instead is "more or less", to which I will come back in the next chapter. This means that, although the words are not used, the PCS in practice includes the notion of *defectus ordinis*, a notion that should be

¹⁴⁴ This is not an exact quotation, but linguistically edited, taken from Fykse Tveit, 'Who Defines Who We Are?', p239.

¹⁴⁵ PCS §34.

¹⁴⁶ See Chapter 5.4.5.

¹⁴⁷ PCS Foreword §9. Cf. Group des Dombes: "The question of *episcopate* and of the episcopate cannot be studied, in our opinion, on a purely doctrinal level. The ideas that are formed about them and the reactions that are made to them are always bound up with the actual, familiar working model. Progress towards reconciliation therefore requires not just the necessary doctrinal clarifications, but the taking into account of the situations in which we each find ourselves. It is from there that we have to set out on the journey in a spirit of conversion (*metanoia*)."

Clifford, *For the Communion of the Churches*, p40.

understood in its ecclesiological context. *Defectus ordinis*, which is taken from the Vatican II document *Unitatis Redintegratio*,¹⁴⁸ is in practice held by the CoE in Meissen, stating both the validity of the sacramental acts in the EKD and the necessity of episcopacy in succession for the unity of the church. The lack of episcopacy is, in this view, a *deficiency*. As Michael Root has noted, the notion of *defectus ordinis* is not alien to Lutheran understanding, since in Lutheran perspective a community lacking the ordained ministry of word and sacrament is not a church in the strict sense and contains *defects*.¹⁴⁹

The PCS represents an ecclesiology that is not concerned with the *essentials* or the *fundamentals* of the church, but with the church's *fullness*.¹⁵⁰ According to the PCS, all four marks of the Church – unity, holiness, apostolicity and catholicity – belong to its fullness. Episcopal succession is an expression of the church's apostolic continuity, but not the only one. That ingredient is seen as an effective sacramental sign, and as such it belongs to the church's fullness, which means that the lack of this is a deficiency and, in Tjørhom's words, "no church can afford to neglect a single potential sign of the apostolic continuity".¹⁵¹ (So far I have said nothing about the question of validity, which will be dealt with in the next chapter.)

In the Porvoo debate this ecclesiology of fullness, and its consequence for an understanding of the *deficiencies* of the churches, was almost completely overlooked. The closest description of this aspect of the PCS was that of Tjørhom, who emphasised that the PCS says that the churches mutually complement each other with gifts, and particularly with the gift of unity.¹⁵² That this aspect of the PCS was not noticed more is striking, since the PCS actually confirms that the lack of episcopal succession is seen as a deficiency immediately after it has elaborated the mutual recognition of the episcopal ministries of the Porvoo churches in §52-53; §54 states:

To the degree to which our ministries have been separated all our churches have lacked something of that fullness which God desires for his people (Eph. 1: 23 and 3: 17-19). By moving together, and by being served by a reconciled and mutually recognized episcopal ministry, our churches will be both more faithful to their calling and also more conscious of their need for renewal. By the sharing of our life and ministries in closer visible unity, we shall be strengthened for the continuation of Christ's mission in the world.

It is important to note in this regard that in §48 the PCS says that the effect of ordination in episcopal succession is not only the transfer of episcopal

¹⁴⁸ RCC, 'Unitatis Redintegratio', p520, §22. See further Chapter 14.1.

¹⁴⁹ Root, 'Bishops, Ministry, and the Unity of the Church', p29f.

¹⁵⁰ PCS §54. This shall not be confused with the Anglican concepts of *esse*, *bene esse* or *plene esse* which, in contrast to the PCS, represent an ecclesiology of fundamentals.

¹⁵¹ Tjørhom, 'The Church and Its Apostolicity', p200.

¹⁵² See e.g. Tjørhom, 'Better Together'.

ministry, but also the establishment of the unity and collegiality of the Church and its bishops. The reason that the important aspect of *fullness* in the PCS was not discussed more is that most of the Porvoo debate, as in the case of Fykse Tveit, was concerned with the question of validity rather than with unity; while the PCS is more concerned with unity rather than with validity. As a consequence, the tension in the Porvoo solution – that episcopal ministry in churches who lack episcopal succession is still recognised as authentic, at the same time that episcopal succession is said to be an effective sacramental sign – was often not kept together and the effective sign of episcopal succession reduced to a mere symbolic sign. That was accomplished in order to hold the picture together. However, it does not sufficiently consider the ecclesiological approach and how the issue of validity might be understood.

One example of how influential the issue of validity in connection with the line of episcopal ordination was for the Porvoo debate is Harding Meyer's comment on §48 in the PCS, which describes how ordination in episcopal succession is effective in four ways.¹⁵³ According to Meyer, "only the fourth and last affirmation points to something clearly 'effective', when it is said that the sign of ordination in episcopal succession '*transmits* ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God's will and institution'."¹⁵⁴ While Meyer is right in the perspective of the individual bishop and the isolated act of ordination, §48 also relates to the ecclesiological significance and effect of the ordination that gives the first three meanings an effective meaning as well.¹⁵⁵ I will come back to this issue in Chapters 14 and 15.

Much of the argument in the ELCD, as well as in the CoN, emerged from an irritation that an emphasis on episcopal succession as something substantial would mean that those churches should be understood as second-class churches. In the perspective of psychology, identity, and devotion, this is very understandable, for no-one wants to be said to be deficient. However, ecclesologically this is to argue from a problematic basis, which at the same time indicates the changed perspective in the PCS. To say that a particular church has a deficiency does not mean that this church is without value or that it could not be more holy in other aspects. As the PCS understands it, the fullness of the Church is not only about episcopal succession, but about the unity, holiness, catholicity and apostolicity of the Church as a whole.

If episcopal succession is understood in its 'strong sense', it is crucial to the Porvoo solution that the churches involved embrace episcopal succession and integrate it as a valuable and necessary sign of their identity as an apostolic church. The conversion process to do so is an important aspect of the

¹⁵³ I described this in Chapter 6.2.3

¹⁵⁴ Meyer, 'Some Observations Concerning the Unity Concept of the PCS', p142.

¹⁵⁵ PCS §48. See Chapter 2.5.8. for a description of this section in the PCS.

dynamic character of the PCS, and a basis for the Porvoo Communion.¹⁵⁶ Nørgaard-Højen was right when, during the Danish Porvoo debate, he remarked that the PCS indicates that it was regrettable that the western Nordic churches lost the episcopal succession in the 16th century.¹⁵⁷ Luther and Melancthon would have agreed.¹⁵⁸ However, the PCS offers this interpretation without saying that there had been any other possibility, or that those churches were wrong in their critique of the misconduct in the medieval church.¹⁵⁹ As §57 explicitly states, the PCS says that all churches concerned “affirm together the value and use of the sign of the historic episcopal succession” and this is done without “an adverse judgement on the ministries of those churches which did not previously make use of the sign”.¹⁶⁰

However episcopal succession is understood and valued – as a mere road sign and symbol, or as an effective sign – the reintroduction of the sign of episcopal succession means that something is added to this church that was not previously there. One of the results of the Reformation was that some of the Reformation churches lost episcopal succession. When some of those now regain episcopal succession, the period for which they were without it might be understood as a *historical irregularity*.¹⁶¹ To say that there has been a *historical irregularity* in the churches that did not retain episcopal succession at the Reformation,¹⁶² does not necessarily say anything about the validity of those orders. What it does say is that those churches that, after the Reformation, no longer ordained their bishops in episcopal succession, did this in an irregular way according to the tradition of the Church. Such a perspective is not alien to Lutheran understanding. Rather, it is the content of the Lutheran understanding of the presbyteral ordinations as *in extremis*, especially as the Evangelic reformers also argued that ordinations *should* be carried out by bishops.¹⁶³ Correspondingly, the same could be said about episcopacy in the CoS, the CoE and the RCC, given that their bishops, although ordained in episcopal succession, were – and even still are – irregular given the lack of unity.¹⁶⁴

¹⁵⁶ PCS 32k, 57. See also, LWF, ‘The Episcopal Ministry within the Apostolicity of the Church’, §13f. “Ordained servants of the church carry out a specific task in the service of the mission and ministry of the whole people of God. The ordained ministry belongs to God's gifts to the church, essential and necessary for the church to fulfil its mission.”

¹⁵⁷ Nørgaard-Højen, *Den nye diskussion om Porvoo 2010*, p21f.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. Apology 14, quoted above in Chapter 13.3.1.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. Nørgaard-Højen, ‘Kirken og kirkerne’, p249.

¹⁶⁰ PCS §53.

¹⁶¹ Hietamäki also notes this: Hietamäki, *Agreeable Agreement*, p164f.

¹⁶² The term *irregularity* was used in medieval canon law and understood as a state in which a person, due to physical or spiritual disabilities, was regarded as unable to conduct the holy acts of the church. I understand the concept differently, as a way to describe that there has been some deviation in the practice of a church for a shorter or a longer time. For the medieval use, see Ingesman, ‘Begrepet “irregularitet” i den middelalderlige kirke’.

¹⁶³ Root, ‘Bishops, Ministry, and the Unity of the Church’, p8.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p27, §100.

Although those irregularities are of two different kinds, they are related to each other since both were a consequence of the Reformation conflict, and meant that the western catholic church was divided into separate independent national churches. The PCS does not use the term *irregularity*, but the concept is a description of how the PCS understands the division and the churches involved in this division. Augustine had already emphasised in the Donatist controversy that, although the act of betrayal in handing over Christian books to the pagan authorities is a sin, schism is a more serious sin by far.¹⁶⁵ The disunity of the Church is not only a sin, it is also – according to the PCS – the greatest irregularity of the church and “must be regarded as an anomalous situation”.¹⁶⁶

Historical irregularity means further that it can be repaired, which is the purpose of the PCS.¹⁶⁷ The perception of the lack of episcopal succession as a *historical irregularity* follows from the normative understanding of episcopal succession in the PCS. The division meant that the vertical and salvific relation in the various church provinces were maintained, but that the horizontal relation of the one Church was broken and resulted in a number of national churches and denominational groups. Through this a vital and necessary aspect of the Church as a *sacramentum mundi* was lost.

Historically in the relations between the Porvoo churches, it has been a sensitive matter to say anything about episcopal succession in a normative way, since that might imply that the churches that did not retain episcopal succession had an invalid ordained ministry. As we have seen, this interpretation is closely related to the issue of the validity of episcopal ministry.

¹⁶⁵ McGrath, *Christian Theology - An Introduction*, p480.

¹⁶⁶ PCS §22.

¹⁶⁷ Hill, ‘Introduction’, p52. Hill states: “On the basis of our agreement on the Church and its faith, on apostolic succession and the episcopate, the members of the Conversation believe that Anglicans will now be able to discern an authentic historic continuity of episcopal ministry in *all* Nordic and Baltic Lutheran churches as well as the Anglican churches of Britain and Ireland. Equally, the way is opened for the restoration of the historic episcopal succession in those Lutheran churches where this has not yet been accepted because it would have been perceived as calling in question their past ministry.”

14. Validity

The sacramental reality of the sign of episcopal succession, according to the PCS, is based on two prerequisites: that episcopal succession is understood as ecclesiological integrated, according to substantive apostolicity; and that episcopal ministry can be identified as an authentic expression of the apostolic tradition of the whole Church. According to the PCS, this is the case with the ordained ministry in all the Porvoo churches, despite a break in manual episcopal succession in some of them. Several Porvoo theologians described this as a question of whether the *res*, i.e. apostolicity can be retained when the *signum*, i.e. manual episcopal succession, is broken.¹ Although the Platonic *signum/res* language, used of the sacraments for the first time by Augustine,² is not found in the PCS, it can easily be used in analysis, since church and sacraments are described as signs and instruments in the PCS. In the perspective of this language, both BEM and the PCS claim that, under certain conditions, the *res* can be retained even if the *signum* has been lost – which is what the Porvoo solution claims. This was often regarded in the Porvoo debate as a contradiction.³

The *res/sign* language was used by the Porvoo theologians as a way to conceptualise the Porvoo solution. While this language may serve as a precise description of the problem to be solved – i.e., whether the *res* can be retained when the sign is lost – it is, in sacramental perspective, not without its risks. Pannenberg has criticised the use of the *res/sign* language in sacramental theology, because it can result in a Platonic separation of inner and outer, material and spiritual, and does not do justice to the materiality of the sacramental nature. Furthermore, the Augustinian application of the Platonic terminology to the sacraments as signs objectified the notion of sacrament, and pushed aside the thought of the sacramental life as partaking in the one divine mystery of salvation.⁴ While Pannenberg's emphasis on the close connection of *signum* and *res* in the sacramental life seems to strengthen the critique of the Porvoo solution as contradictory – because if it is not possible to separate *signum* and *res*, the *res* cannot be preserved if the *signum* is lost – his critique of the objectification of the sacraments and loss of the church's

¹ E.g. USA/LRCD, *Eucharist & Ministry*, p40, 46ff.; Evans, 'Episcopate and Episcopacy', p284; Tjørhom, 'The Church and Its Apostolicity', p200.

² Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p349.

³ Chapters 4, 5, 6.4, and 6.5.

⁴ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p348f.

sacramental nature as mystery indicates that the issue of authentic episcopacy is broader than a merely juridical search for validity, which was often the focus of the critique of the PCS. While the Porvoo solution broadens the issue from an isolated focus on episcopal ordination, it was asked during the Porvoo debate whether such an approach is sacramentally possible, and what happens to the validity of an episcopal ministry ordained without the instrumental sign of manual episcopal succession. Whether such an ecclesiological broadening is possible, which is what the PCS claims, is the issue addressed in this chapter.

The question was whether an episcopal ministry with a break in the *successio manum* could be regarded as valid, or – in the vocabulary of the PCS – as authentic. George Tavard formulated the issue as how can an order “be transmitted by someone who does not have it?”⁵ and Harding Meyer asked whether not the “‘absence of the ‘sign’ fundamentally questions the ‘reality’ of an authentic episcopal office’”. “Especially if it is true that this ‘sign’ ‘transmits’ the ‘ministerial’ [office of the bishop] and its authority’ (§48).”⁶ The core of the Porvoo solution is presented in PCS §52-53, which states that a church’s episcopate can be recognised as authentic, even if there has been a break in manual episcopal succession:

(§52) Faithfulness to the apostolic calling of the whole Church is carried by more than one means of continuity. Therefore a church which has preserved the sign of historic episcopal succession is free to acknowledge an authentic episcopal ministry in a church which has preserved continuity in the episcopal office by an occasional priestly/presbyteral ordination at the time of the Reformation. Similarly a church which has preserved continuity through such a succession is free to enter a relationship of mutual participation in episcopal ordinations with a church which has retained the historical episcopal succession, and to embrace this sign, without denying its past apostolic continuity.

(§53) The mutual acknowledgement of our churches and ministries is theologically prior to the use of the sign of the laying on of hands in the historic succession. Resumption of the use of the sign does not imply an adverse judgement on the ministries of those churches which did not previously make use of the sign. It is rather a means of making more visible the unity and continuity of the Church at all times and in all places.⁷

As already noted,⁸ the argumentation in those sections of the PCS is tricky, because it alternates between different concepts and discusses *episcopal succession*, *continuity* and *authentic episcopal ministry* and distinguishes between *historic episcopal succession*, i.e. manual episcopal succession, and a *succession that has preserved continuity* through an occasional presbyteral ordination. The PCS argues that the Porvoo churches were already episco-

⁵ Tavard, ‘A Catholic Reflection on the Porvoo Statement’, p355.

⁶ Meyer, ‘Some Observations Concerning the Unity Concept of the PCS’, p143.

⁷ PCS §53.

⁸ Chapter 2.5.8.

pally ordered prior to the PCS and claimed continuity in the apostolic tradition. This continuity included, for the Porvoo churches, *successio sedis*,⁹ and for most of them *successio manuum*; and all claimed that they have always had the intention to do what the church does (*intentio faciendi quod facit ecclesia*) and provide the church with episcopal ministers.¹⁰

Although the PCS does not specifically discuss *validity*,¹¹ it is reasonable to assume that *authentic* includes *valid*, in relation to the instrumental and sacramental understanding of episcopal ministry and ordination in the PCS. Through the change in terminology, the PCS broadened the scope from a narrow focus on office objectified in an ontological manner – i.e., the validly ordained person has received an indelible character and possesses the power to consecrate bread and wine in the eucharist; and, in the case of the bishop, the extended *potestas* of *magisterii*, *jurisdictionis* and *ordinis*. Instead the PCS includes both ontology and functionality in a sacramental understanding of episcopal ministry. In this way the perspective becomes broader and includes not only the issues of episcopal succession and validity, but also the concrete functionality of episcopal ministry in the community of the church. This broadening is important because it means that the issue of apostolicity is widened from a narrow focus on one or a few aspects of the church, such as *successio manuum* or *successio doctrinae*, to the concrete continuing life of the church; and it is not objectified in a juridical or abstract manner. Still, the issue of validity and validation is not mechanically overcome through such a move, but it does not raise the problem of ordained ministry being clothed in juridical language. It further relates the issue to its ecclesiological context, because ordained ministers are not ordained in an individualised way for their own sake, but to serve and build up the church.¹²

It must also be asked whether the PCS makes a historically correct description when it states that the episcopal ordinations in Denmark in 1537 were presbyteral. I will come back to that issue in 14.2.1. below. But first I will by way of background describe how the lack of mutual recognition of church and ministry has been problematised in the ecumenical discussion. In the second half of this chapter I will discuss the possibility of different kinds of *validation*, and how a broadened ecclesiology in pneumatological and communal perspective has opened the issue up to new considerations.

⁹ PCS §§49, 52. However, among the Porvoo churches the ELCLith and the Scottish Episcopal Church do not claim *successio sedis*, but the episcopate of both those churches is ordained in manual episcopal succession.

¹⁰ PCS §34; cf. Chapter 14.2.3.

¹¹ Furberg, 'Kyrkogemenskap', p35.

¹² PCS §§17-26, 41.

14.1. The ecumenical background to the quest for ‘validity’

When the PCS was published in 1993, it was regarded as a breakthrough because it claims to overcome earlier divisive perceptions of episcopacy and succession.¹³ In its intention to go beyond “earlier piecemeal agreements”,¹⁴ and a one-dimensional focus on episcopal succession, the PCS relates to an area in ecumenical theology that has developed during the 20th century. Another expression of this evolution is how the RCC changed its approach towards other churches during the 20th century. Before Vatican II, the RCC identified the Church of Christ exclusively with itself, and other churches were not understood as churches. In its dogmatic constitution on the church, *Lumen Gentium*, Vatican II softened this exclusive understanding and replaced it with a more open understanding that states that the Church of Christ *subsistit in* the RCC.¹⁵ As a consequence, the RCC opened itself to a re-evaluation of other churches and to ecumenical dialogue.¹⁶

Important sources of inspiration for this development, besides new ecclesiological thinking, were the mutual experiences of other churches. Despite the loss of episcopal succession in some Reformation churches, and according to RC valuation of the ordained ministry in all non-Roman Reformation churches, it may be noted that apparently they did survive as independent church provinces after the separation with Rome,¹⁷ and developed into autonomous national churches. This evolution could be described as a two-stage development: the united provinces of the one western catholic church separated into independent church provinces, which later become autonomous national and confessional churches. In Chapter 9.2 this development was described as an interim stage that awaits resolution, towards which the PCS regards itself to be an important first step.¹⁸

In regard to the Porvoo churches, they were all episcopally ordered national churches, regardless of whether their bishops were in manual episcopal succession or not. At the Reformation they continued to live in their respective areas and nations, largely isolated for several centuries from each other and from other churches, representing the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church – i.e., the Church of Christ – in their respective geographic are-

¹³ See e.g. CoE, Anglican Committee Appointed by the Archbishop of Canterbury for the Oslo Meeting, ‘The Oslo Report 1951’, p6 (p284b in the folder).

¹⁴ PCS Foreword §6.

¹⁵ RCC, ‘*Lumen Gentium*’, p9, §8. Not *est* as originally drafted, but *subsistit in*.

¹⁶ Cf. Dulles, *The Catholicity of the Church*, p21.

¹⁷ An expression for this is found in e.g. BEM M§37: “In churches which practise the succession through the episcopate, it is increasingly recognized that a continuity in apostolic faith, worship and mission has been preserved in churches which have not retained the form of historic episcopate.” See also; Van Beeck, ‘Towards an Ecumenical Understanding of the Sacraments’; Root, ‘Bishops, Ministry, and the Unity of the Church’.

¹⁸ PCS §60.

as. The word was preached and the sacraments administered for the people of God, in the same dioceses and parishes, in the same church buildings, and in some provinces with the same bishops and, at least initially, with the same priests and later with new priests ordained by bishops (although there have been priests presbyterally ordained in all Reformation churches).

Even if we note the historical fact that the church provinces of the one western catholic church continued to live in isolation after the Reformation and the break with each other and the bishop of Rome, this is not to say that episcopal succession is without meaning; nor is it to deny that, in the perspective of the one western catholic church, there were substantial changes in all the emerging churches of the four traditions of the Reformation (cf. Chapter 9.2.). This, however, gives rise to the problem of making the simplistic judgement that some of the Reformation churches are not proper churches on the grounds that their episcopate is evaluated as being invalid.¹⁹

The focus on validity in the Porvoo debate is understandable, given the medieval perspective and its rationalist and juridical approach to ordained ministry as a *potestas* conferred on the individual office bearer through ordination. This focus on validity represents the traditional understandings of ordination and the transmission of ordained ministry among both Lutherans and Anglicans. From a Lutheran perspective, the emphasis in CA 14 on *rite vocatus* connotes the requirement of an ordained minister to be called in a proper sense, including right ordination. Although this transfer in some Lutheran churches has been presbyteral, it still regards ordination as needing to be done by another ordained minister in order to be seen as valid and as the successors of the apostles.²⁰ The norm in all Porvoo churches has been ordination conducted episcopally, even though there have been exceptions to this norm – as is also the case in the RCC.²¹

The focus on episcopal ordination as a requirement for validity represents the traditional Anglican and RC understanding of episcopal succession and ecclesiology; in practice, some Lutheran churches were ambivalent about the matter. According to the RC understanding, those churches that did not retain episcopal succession at the Reformation cannot be regarded as churches in the proper sense,²² since they do not have a valid ordained ministry. From a RC perspective, this is the case with the ordained ministry in all the Porvoo churches: all are judged, in one way or another, to be deficient (*defectus ordinis*).²³ In consequence, the RCC has re-ordained those former clergy of Porvoo churches who later became RC clergy. That has sometimes also been the case in the Nordic-Baltic churches when a RC priest was received into

¹⁹ Cf. Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*, p236; Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p400.

²⁰ Piepkorn, 'The Sacred Ministry and Holy Ordination', p110f.

²¹ DzH 1145, 1146, 1290, 1435; McDonnell, 'Ways of Validating Ministry', p234ff.

²² E.g. RCC, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 'Dominus Iesus', §17.

²³ RCC, 'Unitatis Redintegratio', p520, §22; for an overview of Orthodox statements on Anglican Orders, see Hardy, *Orthodox Statements on Anglican Orders*.

those churches²⁴ – a practice that has changed as a result of ecumenical progress.²⁵ The RCC recognises, in an ambivalent way, the validity of orders in the Old Catholic Church.²⁶ This is of some importance for the relation of the Porvoo churches to the RCC.²⁷ Since the 1931 Bonn Agreement between the CoE and the Old Catholic Church, Old Catholic bishops have regularly participated in the ordinations of Anglican bishops – bishops who later have participated in episcopal ordinations in the Nordic-Baltic churches.²⁸ In this kind of argument, the focus is entirely on the validity of ordination as the basis for the validity of ordained ministry.

While this reasoning is typical of the western ecclesial tradition, the approach has traditionally been different in the Orthodox churches, which normally have treated ordained ministry and validity in a broader ecclesiological framework. In the ecumenical movement, biblical, historical and

²⁴ E.g. Olson and Lindqvist, *Fredrik Muckenhirn*.

²⁵ USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p29, §110.

²⁶ The RC Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith states in a decision of 3 January 1987: “Among the churches which are in the same situation as the oriental churches named in can. 844 § 3 we include the Old Catholic churches in Europe and the Polish National Church in the United States of America” (Prot. No. 759/68). However, this statement also points out that it does not “carry official weight in the sense that it is to be understood as a normative judgment of the Apostolic See”. See Introduction to Roman Catholic - Old Catholic Dialogue Commission, ‘The Church and Ecclesial Communion’.

²⁷ It has happened that the RCC has ordained *sub conditionis*. This was the case, for example, with the previous Anglican Bishop of London, Dr Graham Leonard, who was ordained as an RC priest *sub conditionis*. The Vatican’s action is surprising, since it was motivated by reference to a ‘pipeline-succession’ through the participation of Old Catholic bishops in Anglican bishops’ ordinations since 1931, and without any references to modern ecumenical consensus about substantive apostolicity. Anglican Colin Podmore has commented on the case: “Dr Leonard’s conversion was rendered even more significant by subsequent events. Speaking at a press conference at the end of the Low Week meeting of the Roman Catholic Bishops’ Conference for England and Wales [in 1994], Cardinal Hume stressed that *Apostolicae Curae*, Leo XIII’s bull of 1896 declaring Anglican Orders ‘absolutely null and utterly void’, remained ‘totally normative’. Within ten days, however, he was to take an action which would indicate that this was no longer a norm without exceptions. On 23 April [1994] the Cardinal, acting on instructions from the Holy See, ordained Dr Graham Leonard to the priesthood not absolutely but *conditionally*, on the grounds that there was a ‘prudent doubt’ as to the invalidity of priestly orders conferred on him by an Anglican bishop using the Anglican rite.” In a press release the Cardinal stated, among other things: “Whilst firmly re-stating the judgement of *Apostolicae Curae* that Anglican Ordination is invalid the [Roman] Catholic Church takes account of the involvement, in some Anglican Episcopal ordinations, of Bishops of the ‘Old Catholic Church of the Union of Utrecht’ who are validly ordained. In particular and probably rare cases the authorities in Rome may judge that there is a ‘prudent doubt’ concerning the invalidity of priestly ordination received by an individual Anglican minister ordained in this line of succession.” Considering that Old Catholic bishops have regularly participated in Anglican ordinations since 1931, there are probably no CoE bishops today who are ordained outside such participation. In line with this focus on the individual ordination, this is also the case with the clergy of the CoS and the ELCF, and nowadays with a great deal of the clergy in the rest of the Porvoo communion. Podmore, ‘Dr Leonard’s Ordination’, p9ff.

²⁸ November 23 2016 the Old Catholic Church and the CoS signed an agreement, close in content to the PCS. See CoS and Old Catholic Church, ‘Utrecht and Uppsala on the Way to Communion’. See also below Part IV, Appendix.

systematic theological studies have led to a growing awareness that there are serious defects in the traditional method of determining the *validity* of ordained ministry.²⁹ This growing awareness is important for the sensitive inter-ecclesial question about the recognition of ordained ministry. As an example, the LRCJC says, in *The Ministry in the Church* (1981), about the mutual recognition of ordained ministry:

Proposals for such procedures [of mutual recognition] as a supplementary ordination, a juridical declaration or a mutual laying on of hands, any of which could be interpreted as either an act of ordination or as an act of reconciliation, are not completely satisfactory if they are understood as isolated acts. Nor can the question be answered exclusively in terms of canonical criteria of validity. Mutual recognition must not be regarded as an isolated act or carried out as such. It must occur in the confession of the one faith in the context of the unity of the church and in the celebration of the Lord's supper, the sacrament of unity. Lutherans and [Roman] Catholics, therefore, share the conviction that ordination by bishops, apart from reference to specific church communities, does not represent a solution. The only theologically meaningful way of solving this question is through a process in which the churches reciprocally accept each other. From this standpoint, the acceptance of full church communion would signify also the mutual recognition of ministries.³⁰

According to this document, the approach has changed from a focus on isolated ordinations to ecclesiology and to what I have referred to as *substantive apostolicity*, which includes the entire life, faith and structure of the church's *communio*. Through this changed ecclesiological approach it is the ecclesial reality that contextualises the recognition of ordained ministries, not the isolated *validity* of orders that determines the recognition of churches.³¹

The same change is visible in the works of many contemporary theologians.³² The RC theologian Francis A. Sullivan concludes his book on the reasons for the establishment of the threefold order in the early church as follows:

I believe we have sound reasons to hold that Christian ministry, in order to be fully valid, must be related to Christ and his apostles through the historic succession maintained in the college of bishops. At the same time, I believe that we have tended to pay too exclusive attention to the conditions for the validity of ministry and have not sufficiently explored the implications of the fruitfulness of a ministry that may not meet all the conditions we believe are required for validity. One implication, which certainly needs deeper exploration, concerns the ecclesial character of communities that have not retained the episcopate, but which for centuries have led numberless Christians to

²⁹ Faith & Order, *Louvain 1971*, p97.

³⁰ LRCJC, 'The Ministry in the Church (1981)', p273, §82.

³¹ Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p379.

³² Among Lutherans, see e.g. Schlink, Cullman and Pannenberg. Among Anglicans, see e.g. Sykes, Avis. Among RC, see e.g. Congar, Rahner, Fries, Schillebeeckx, Ratzinger, Kasper, Strong. Among Orthodox, see e.g. Afanasiev, Zizioulas.

grace and salvation through the effective preaching of the Word of God and a fruitful pastoral ministry. I do not believe that we have done full justice to such communities when we simply declare that they are not churches in the proper sense.³³

Sullivan's concise remark witnesses in several ways to the development of RC theology and of an ecumenical approach since Vatican II. In his remark, it is not a question about ordained ministry being *valid* or *non-valid*, but rather whether or not ordained ministry in other churches can be regarded as *fully valid*. This difference is important in comparison to RC understanding pre-Vatican II. In 1928 Pope Pius XI stated in his Encyclical *Mortalium Animos* that "the Apostolic See cannot on any terms take part in their [ecumenical] assemblies, nor is it anyway lawful for Catholics either to support or to work for such enterprises; for if they do so they will be giving countenance to a false Christianity, quite alien to the one Church of Christ".³⁴ He identified the only church of Christ with the RCC and in consequence "the other Christian communities existed outside the church and were referred to with such concepts as 'all – nothing', 'inside – outside', 'true – false'".³⁵ Vatican II modified this approach to a more dialogical one, based on an anthropological perspective of searching for the truth and respecting the dignity and liberty of the human person.³⁶ Through the ecumenical dialogues since Vatican II, the common perspective has developed from the earlier perspective of "all or nothing", "valid or non-valid" towards a search for the fullness of the church, with openness to 'less' fullness.³⁷ This perspective is present in the 1980 LRCJC document, *Ways to Community*, which suggests a process of gradual merging until final unity is attained,³⁸ in which the churches can recognise the Church of Christ in each other, even though there might be deficiencies and a lack of fullness. As noted in the previous chapter, the PCS states that "to the degree to which our ministries have been separated, all our churches have lacked something of that fullness which God desires for his people".³⁹ The USA/LRCD states that "the mutual recognition of ministries

³³ Sullivan, *From Apostles to Bishops*, p236.

³⁴ Pope Pius XI, 'Mortalium Animos', §8. The Pope's negative verdict was not only based on an exclusivist ecclesiology, but also on a critique of the early ecumenical movement's perception of ecumenism as cooperation, which tended to treat doctrinal differences too lightly and to reduce eschatology to teleology as formulated in the liberal theology of the time; see Farrow, 'Church, Ecumenism, and Eschatology', p349f.

³⁵ Maffei, *Il ministero nella Chiesa*, p13. "L'unica Chiesa, fondata da Gesù Cristo, si identifica con la Chiesa Cattolica e, ci conseguenza, il rapporto con le altre comunità cristiane esistenti al di fuori di essa è visto in termini di 'tutto – niente', 'dentro – fuori', 'verità-errore'."

³⁶ Ibid., p14.

³⁷ Ibid., p218f; Cf. Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*.

³⁸ LRCJC, 'Ways to Community'.

³⁹ PCS §54.

need not be an all-or-nothing matter and should not be reduced to a simple judgement about validity or invalidity”.⁴⁰

The tension, discussed by Sullivan, between valid and non-valid respectively as fully or less valid, was expressed by Vatican II with the concept *defectus ordinis*.⁴¹ In the decree on ecumenism, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, it is stated:

Although the ecclesial communities separated from us lack the fullness of unity with us which flows from baptism, and although we believe they have not preserved the proper reality of the eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of a defect of the sacrament of orders, nevertheless when they commemorate the Lord’s death and resurrection in the Holy Supper, they profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and awaits his coming in glory.⁴²

Even during the discussions of Vatican II, *defectus ordinis* was interpreted in different ways. Immediately after Vatican II the term was interpreted as a total absence of ordained ministry. Gradually – and in consequence of the deepening of ecclesiology – the concept has been understood as a *deficiency* in the ordained ministry of those Reformation churches not in communion with the bishop of Rome, although it is uncertain how the nature of this deficiency should be understood.⁴³ The issue has been widened from a focus on the validity of ordination and ordained ministry to the ecclesiological question about the unity of the church.⁴⁴ In a comment of *defectus ordinis* in the USA/LRCD, the RC Harry J. McSorely described this new perspective:

Ministers of the eucharist who have not been rightly ordained by ‘ecclesiastical and canonical power’ are regarded as illegitimate ministers of the sacrament. In our view this is so mainly because the eucharist they lead does not manifest the unity of the whole church in which all Christians ought to be united in a bond of peace and fellowship with each other that is symbolized not only by a common eating and drinking, but also by the minister’s unity with the local bishop who in turn is in union with the bishop of Rome.⁴⁵

The concept *defectus ordinis* is not used in the PCS, which strives to avoid such descriptions and aims to declare the mutual recognition of the Porvoo churches. The use of *defectus ordinis* is a way to emphasise the value of sacramental order, but without denying the value of churches and ministries

⁴⁰ USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p26, §95.

⁴¹ For the discussion at Vatican II behind *defectus ordinis*: Jaeger, *Das Konzilsdekret über den Ökumenismus*, p144ff; McSorley, ‘The RC Doctrine of the Competent Minister’, p135.

⁴² RCC, ‘Unitatis Redintegratio’, p520, §22. This edition translates *defectus ordinis* with the words “the absence of the sacrament of orders”, but it could also be translated as “a defect”.

⁴³ Cipriani, *Defectus Ordinis*; Walter, ‘Sacramenti Ordinis defectus’.

⁴⁴ Skodowski, *Romersk-katolsk tolkning av defectus ordinis*, p72. Cf. Dalferth, who noted this change in the theology of the CoE (Chapter 13.3).

⁴⁵ McSorley, ‘The RC Doctrine of the Competent Minister’, p136.

formally outside of such order. As described in Chapter 13, the concept is implicit in the Anglican position in *Meissen* and in the PCS, because it only recognises ordained ministers who are episcopally ordained.⁴⁶ Implicitly this means that orders that are not episcopally ordained are in some way defective.

The discussion about *defectus ordinis* is relevant as background to my investigation because the Porvoo debate was focused to a great extent on *validity*. Because the Porvoo solution was seen as contradictory in that respect, the feasibility of the PCS was judged negatively. Although validity was at the centre of the Porvoo debate, there were only a few theologians who actually discussed the meaning of the concept and saw what problems it raised. That was also the case with those who defended the PCS, who referred to the ecclesiological perspective of the PCS – usually, however, without discussing the question of validity. An exception was the RC observer of the Porvoo Conversations, Henrik Roelvink, who emphasised that the PCS adopts a different position:

The deciding norm or sign of having ‘right’ bishops is traditionally focused on the *validity of ordinations* and consecrations. This in itself is a juridical term, but with immediate relationship to the need for security about the receiving of Christ’s salvation. The Porvoo Statement does not estimate the validity of ordinations according to juridical categories, as in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as to who has the right to issue the ordination ritual, the pope or the king. Nor are we to proceed from the parts to the whole, as from nineteenth century until today, when the chain of persons who ordained with the right *materia* (laying on of hands), the right *forma* (ordination prayer) and the right *intentio* (‘to do what the Church does’) has been seen as an absolute condition for valid apostolic succession. Instead, we are to think ecclesologically and start with the apostolicity of the Church and its essential life.⁴⁷

Roelvink touches upon several issues about *validity* that are important to investigate further. Behind the question whether or not a particular ordained ministry is valid lies the question about how validity is discerned – i.e., the issue of *validation* – and whether it is possible to find other ways of validating ministry than through *ritual validation* – i.e., ordination. That question had been discussed in the ecumenical movement in light of developed ecclesiology, a deepened historical and exegetic knowledge, and the growing recognition of the apostolicity of churches outside episcopal succession.⁴⁸ While it is one thing to note that there are deficiencies in the method of *ritual validation*, it is another thing to find trustworthy alternatives. In 1971 Faith & Order suggested in the *Louvain Document*, BEM’s ‘grandfather’,

⁴⁶ PCS §58 *b(v)*. Cf. also PCS §32*j*, 57.

⁴⁷ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p348.

⁴⁸ Cf. BEM M§35-38.

that ritual validation could be broadened through *ecclesiological* and *charismatic validation*.⁴⁹ Ecclesiological validation means that since churches increasingly recognise each other as true churches, and since ordained ministry belong to the true church, it must mean, at least in some sense, that the ordained ministries of those churches are authentic. Charismatic validation refers back to the New Testament period and to the charismatic ministers of the early church as a possible model for validation. The three ways of validating ministry had been suggested the previous year by the RC theologian Killian McDonnell as complementary ways.⁵⁰ More recently, Burkhard has emphasised that the three should be seen as *models*,⁵¹ not as three different *types*, which means that they complement and do not exclude each other.⁵² The three ways suggested by McDonnell and Faith & Order might be regarded as an early attempt to overcome the deadlock over *ritual validation*. While charismatic and ecclesiological validation may be seen as complementary perspectives to ritual validation, Faith & Order, in the same document, also pointed to the pneumatic reality behind the three ways and stated: “As some have inquired, might not *Ecclesia supplet* or ‘economy’ be a final hope, even if the principle would have to be extended to situations where it has, as yet, never been applied?”⁵³ The reference to the Spirit is evidence that the ecumenical movement had started to develop its pneumatological thinking about ecclesiology and ecumenism.

If it is possible to complement *ritual validation* with *charismatic* and *ecclesiological* validation, understood in pneumatological perspective, it implies that the fragmented ecclesiology connected with *ritual validation* is altered by a different and widened ecclesiology. Such an alteration means a change from an ‘all-or-nothing’ to a ‘more-or-less’ perspective, and is a consequence of the ecclesiological change from the medieval *fragmented* and *possessive* ecclesiology to a *holistic* and *fiducial* ecclesiology. Pneumatology and the role of the Holy Spirit are crucial to this ecclesiology. In the PCS this change was described as a deeper ecclesiology. In the Porvoo debate the change, but not the content, of those ecclesiological perspectives was implicitly present in Bishop Tustin’s answer to Yarnold: that it is hard to see how the Porvoo commission “could have set out a ‘higher view’ of historic episcopal succession” than that contained in the PCS “without resorting to some mechanistic, pipeline theory of succession, which, as Fr. Yarnold himself states, ‘few theologians would now wish to defend’.”⁵⁴ A further element of

⁴⁹ Faith & Order, *Louvain 1971*, p99.

⁵⁰ McDonnell, ‘Ways of Validating Ministry’.

⁵¹ McDonnell published his article in 1970, before Dulles approached ecclesiology with the help of the scientific use of models, in 1978. See Dulles, *Models of the Church*, particular chapter 1, ‘The use of Models in Ecclesiology’, p7ff.

⁵² Burkhard, *Apostolicity Then And Now*, p226ff, about the use of models in theology, p95ff.

⁵³ Faith & Order, *Louvain 1971*, p101.

⁵⁴ Tustin, ‘Porvoo Principles’.

this deepened ecclesiology is that apostolicity is seen as a mark of the whole church, not only of episcopal succession, and is expressed tangibly as *substantive apostolicity*.

In the next part of this chapter I will investigate the three forms of validation as well as *ecclesia supplet* and the *economy of the church*. Since, as expressed in the ecumenical documents,⁵⁵ the pneumatological and communal understanding of ecclesiology has deepened since the 1970s, I will interpret ‘charismatic’ and ‘ecclesiological’ validation slightly differently than Faith & Order did in 1971, which I will explain later on. Before I turn to the issue of ecclesiological validation, I will investigate the nature of ritual validation in order to understand why it became so important for the Porvoo debate, and how it relates to ecclesiological validation. Since *validity* was such a crucial concept in the Porvoo debate, I will first investigate the history and the meaning of that concept. The dominance of *validity* as *ritual validation* in the Porvoo debate is in itself an expression of how important this perspective has been in the western tradition.

14.2. Ritual validation

Even though the PCS does not make use of the term *validity*, there was a general focus on *validity* in the Porvoo debate. The concept, with or without the term, was taken more-or-less for granted and was understood as validation through ordination. Few saw this focus as a problem or tried to investigate its historical background. Rather, the discussion was determined by an inherited perception of validity as *ritual validation*, which probably was mostly unconscious. Exceptions to this, as we have seen, were Roelvink and Tjørhom, who noted that the PCS is focused on the future unity of the Porvoo churches, and not on issues of history and validity. The focus in the Porvoo debate on validity as ritual validation suggests that the changed ecclesiological perspective in the PCS was not recognised, or only partly so. It is therefore important to clarify the background to ritual validation in order to investigate whether there are other possible ways to approach the issue of validity, and whether the Porvoo solution is feasible. Before investigating the meaning of ritual validation I will describe the history of the term ‘validity’ – why it became important and what was the logic behind its use – as background to the continuing discussion about validation of ordained ministry. That history is closely related to the change of ecclesiology of the second millenium in comparison to the early church and a greater dependence upon juridical definitions as an important component of fragmented ecclesiology.

⁵⁵ Cf. BEM, the bilateral documents of ARCIC, LRCJC, ALIC, ALERC and the PCS.

14.2.1. The concept of validity

While an extended history of the concept of *validity* is still to be written,⁵⁶ an overview of its history shows how sacramental theology has changed over time. Even though there has always been a need in the church to discern issues about the authority of ministry, its effectiveness in times of division, and reasons for dismissing a person from the ministry, the use of the concept *valid* made a late appearance. Pre-Tridentine theology, as formulated in the Council of Florence (1438-1445), had begun to formulate what was necessary for a *valid* sacrament without, however, using the concept. Beginning in the 12th century, the development of the concept *validity* was both an expression and the cause of a more individualised and objectified concept of ordained ministry. This was a result of the sacramental ecclesiology of the early church having been largely forgotten. In this conception, validity had become independent of the vocation and sending by a local community, and the church increasingly understood it as a legal structure.⁵⁷ This was the case until the 20th century, with a change occurring only in the second half of the century, which is ongoing.

In the 12th century the writings of Augustine had a profound influence on sacramental theology, as they were spread through the canonical collections of Ivo of Chartres.⁵⁸ With help of the sacramental theories of Augustine, but in a new ecclesiological context, a separation developed between *res* and *sacramentum*, or *signum*, and between the objective reality of a sacrament and the effect of a sacrament.⁵⁹ When the sacraments were increasingly instrumentalised and seen as individual signs of grace, rather than as the whole church's partaking in the salvific mystery of Christ, there was a need to define the minimal conditions for such a sign or act of grace. Behind the development of this thinking about *sacramental validity* was the concern for sacramental objectivity and for sacramental truth.

A further reason for the development of sacramental validity, and the gradual development of a vocabulary of validity, was the relationship between, and the increasing separation of, ordination and jurisdiction. As described in Chapter 9, that separation was one result of the increasingly objectified and instrumentalised understanding of the seven sacraments. The identification of seven sacraments is in itself an expression of this development. In Gratian's important contribution to the development of canon law, the concept of *validity* is crystallised, but he did not make use of the term *validity*. Instead he used terms as *rata*, *irritum*, *falsa*, *inania*, *infectum*, *legiti-*

⁵⁶ Gurrieri, 'Sacramental Validity', p22.

⁵⁷ Chapters 9.3.3., 9.3.4. See also Kasper, *Leadership in the Church*, p127ff.; Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, p54ff.

⁵⁸ Gurrieri, 'Sacramental Validity', p27, 33ff.

⁵⁹ See chapter 11.3., the introduction to chapter 14 and below chapter 14.2.1.

mum.⁶⁰ It was in the 14th century that *valid/invalid* first appeared in relation to any of the sacraments – at that time, only in connection with marriage as a contract, and whether the contract and the sacrament could be separate. This development took place, however, in a general approach to the sacraments.⁶¹ The discussion of marriage came, so to say, to be the ‘door’ to the use of the terminology of *validity* in a more general sacramental setting. This development further reinforced the objectification of the sacraments, particularly following the Council of Trent.⁶² The term was used in the discussion at Trent, but only rarely in the decrees. In the words of Gurrieri:

For the Fathers of Trent, the vocabulary of validity was theological ‘new-speak’ and belonged firmly in the realm of law and not in theology, and especially not in magisterial pronouncements. Thus, in a certain sense, while the concept of sacramental validity was accepted by the Council of Trent, its new vocabulary was not.⁶³

In the late 16th century the vocabulary broke through and by the late 17th and early 18th centuries *validity* was part of the fundamental language of sacramental theology, and was affecting liturgical praxis. First during the pontificate of Benedict XIV (1740-1758), *validity* became part of the terminology of the papal *magisterium*. Benedict wrote extensively in sacramental theology and applied the new terminology. The increasing importance of the concept demonstrates that canon law had acquired a growing hold over the sacraments, and in the 19th century this would produce a minimalist rigorism with consequences for the practical life of the church. This meant that the earlier discussion of authenticity developed in a rationalistic and juridical direction that narrowed the understanding of the sacraments.

Another effect of the emergence of the terminology of *validity* was that the earlier history was read through the lens of the concept. That is true, for example, for how Thomas Aquinas (who did not make use of *validity*),⁶⁴ Augustine and Ignatius of Antioch were interpreted. Ignatius emphasises the necessity of each eucharistic meal being celebrated validly, which meant it had to be celebrated in communion with the bishop or someone else with his permission. Only such a eucharist serves the unity of the church. The interest of Ignatius was not in validity as we understand it, but rather in the concept of what we today call ‘*licity*’⁶⁵ – i.e., a lawful eucharist is celebrated in communion with the church.

What are the conclusions of the history of *validity*? From the perspective of an individualised ordained ministry as a person possessing certain

⁶⁰ Gurrieri, ‘Sacramental Validity’, p36.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p27f.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p42ff.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, p46.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p39.

⁶⁵ McSorley, ‘The RC Doctrine of the Competent Minister’, p122ff.

potestas, and understood in the framework of a fragmented ecclesiology (see Chapter 9.3.), the focus was by necessity on validity as ritual validation. In a more elaborated ecclesiological perspective, ordination is still crucial, but understood from an ecclesiological and pneumatological perspective.⁶⁶ The sacraments are seen more in the context of the economy of the church, rather than from a juridical perspective, and validity becomes a ‘more-or-less’ issue rather than a matter of ‘all-or-nothing’, and the concept of validity moves in the direction of authenticity in communal perspective.⁶⁷ That opens the issue for ‘ecclesiological validation’. First, however, there is a need to investigate the meaning of ‘ritual validation’ and how it relates to the PCS.

14.2.2. Validation through ordination

The search of the Porvoo Conversations for a deeper ecclesiological understanding does not mean that ritual validation is said to be erroneous, nor that it is abandoned, but it means that it is broadened through a deeper and more integrated ecclesiological approach. For the issue of validation this means, as stated already in Chapter 1, that although the term is not used in the PCS the thing is there, but understood in a broader setting. Expressed more specifically, this indicates that the traditional basis for ritual validation is easily discernible in the PCS, but ecclesologically integrated. Ritual validation and the logic behind it still compose an important part of the PCS, but now broadened through its ecclesiological approach. It is therefore important to investigate the meaning of ritual validation, and how it has affected the inter-ecclesial discussion through history, as an explanatory background to the PCS and to the concept of ecclesiological validation. To do so, I will describe the issue of validity in a quite general way, before relating ritual validation to the PCS at the end of this section.

The traditional scholastic method of investigating the validity of a sacrament is to make use of the concepts *materia*, *forma* and *intentio*,⁶⁸ as requisites for ordination. *Materia* refers to the outer material signs that have been considered necessary for a valid ordination, such as the laying on of hands or anointing with oil. *Forma* is the content of the ordination prayer, which expresses the church’s intention with the ordination. *Intentio* is the meaning and understanding of the ministry intended with the ordination. The *intentio* is partly expressed in the ordination prayer, and also in the church’s understanding of the ministry underlying the ordination. While it has been ecumenically debated what those three are in relation to ordination, the three are themselves not debated, as the practice of baptism demonstrates. It is com-

⁶⁶ Gurrieri, ‘Sacramental Validity’, p57f.; Burkhard, *Apostolicity Then And Now*, p221ff.

⁶⁷ Cf. USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p27, §100.

⁶⁸ For a different lens of analysis for ordination, see Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996. Puglisi analyses ordination through *vocatio*, *benedictio* and *missio*, which relate to the *formation*, *ordination* and *jurisdiction* of the minister.

monly held that, in order to be valid, a baptism should be conducted with the right *materia* (clean water), the right *forma* (in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit), and with the right *intentio* (incorporation into the church as the body of Christ and partaking in his salvific death and resurrection).

Scholastic terminology was developed from Augustine's definition of the process of creating the sacrament as *accedat verbum ad elementum et fit sacramentum*, later quoted by Luther in his *Large catechism*. Among the early scholastics of the 12th and 13th centuries, Augustine's two sacramental aspects of word and element became *forma* and *materia*. In the 12th century, Peter Lombard made an important contribution to sacramental theory when he defined a sacrament as a visible sign of an invisible grace of God, and as that which causes what it signifies. He numbered sacraments to be seven and introduced the idea of *intentio* as the third determining aspect of the sacrament. The notion of seven sacraments was affirmed later, at the 13th century Council of Lyon.⁶⁹ At the Council of Florence (1438-1445), the number of sacraments was authoritatively defined for the first time as seven, and it was stated that the three essential characteristics of a sacrament were its *materia*, *forma* and *intentio*.⁷⁰ At the same time the concept of 'validity' evolved.

The PCS does not explicitly approach ministry using these categories, except for 'intention', which plays an important role in the Porvoo solution; but they are an underlying structure in the statement's description of ordination and its meaning.⁷¹ §47 states that "the precise significance or intention of the laying on of hands as a sign is determined by the prayer or declaration which accompanies it"⁷² – i.e., *materia*, *forma* and *intentio*. The absence of the terminology is probably no coincidence, since a major ambition in the PCS is to broaden the perspective from a narrow focus on episcopal succession and the 'pipeline' theory, to a more ecclesiological understanding of apostolicity and succession. A second reason could be that the authors of Porvoo wanted to avoid a one-sided discussion about the validity of ordained ministry in the different churches. As the concept underlies the understanding of ordination in the PCS, it is possible to analyse its view of ordination by using *materia*, *forma* and *intentio* in the perspective of *ritual validation* and as a background and basis for the further investigation of ecclesiological validation.

It may be regarded as an ecumenical consensus today that the *materia* of ordination is, in coherence with the witness of the New Testament, the laying on of hands.⁷³ In the history of liturgy this has not always been the case.

⁶⁹ Gassmann and Hendrix, *Introduction to the Lutheran Confessions*, p89f.

⁷⁰ DzH 1312-1313. Decree for the Armenians, November 22, 1439.

⁷¹ The rites of ordination in the Porvoo Churches are comprehensively presented in *Together in Mission and Ministry*; and in regard to the Nordic Churches also in Raun Iversen, *Rites of Ordination and Commitment*.

⁷² PCS §47.

⁷³ Cf. Puglisi, 'Theological and Liturgical Considerations', p493.

Indeed, a major discussion point during the Reformation period and at the Council of Trent was whether anointing should be regarded as an effective *momentum* during ordination, with the same importance as the laying on of hands.⁷⁴ The delegates at the Council of Trent held different opinions about what ordination requires, and had only vague knowledge of the historical background of the different ordinations ceremonies. In the end the council could not agree on this point, and the final statement of Trent was a compromise that did not clarify the necessary *materia* of ordination.⁷⁵

The role of anointing was determinative for the negative RC evaluation of ordained ministry in the Swedish church, including Finland and Estonia, in 1583. However, already in the 17th century the RC church historian Jean Morin had shown that the anointing as effective means, and thus as necessary *materia*, was doubtful, as it had never been used in the Eastern Church, and until the 9th century had not been used in Rome.⁷⁶ With the discoveries of Morin and other historians, interest in the detailed shape of the liturgy declined while the emphasis on the intention of ordination increased. The shift is visible in the 1896 papal bull of Leo XIII, *Apostolicae Curae*, which states that Anglican orders in RC perspective are “absolutely null and utterly void”.⁷⁷ The bull is interesting, since it rejects Anglican ordination, as with the Swedish in the 16th century – but on a different basis. In the 16th century it was the lack of anointing that caused rejection; but in 1896 the anointing is not even mentioned. The basis for Rome’s judgement changed during those 300 years from the *materia* to the *forma* and *intentio*, both of which were regarded as improper. The *materia* of ordination was still emphasised, but in 1896 it is solely the laying on of hands, not the anointing, that is stressed.⁷⁸ Only in *Sacramentum Ordinis* in 1947,⁷⁹ Pope Pius XII established that in RC perspective the *materia* of ordination is the laying on of hands, given its practical realisation in the liturgical reforms of Vatican II. In modern times, and in the light of new historical documents from the Vatican archives, the Anglican-Roman Catholic dialogue has stated that *Apostolicae Curae* could be seen rather as the beginning of a process of dialogue than the end of it; and in fact, in 1896 half of the papal commissioners decided in favour of the validity of Anglican orders.⁸⁰ The changed evaluation is also due to the emphasis of Vatican II on the sacramentality of episcopacy.

The PCS does not make explicit use of the term *materia*, but the statement refers to *the laying on of hands* 11 times. The laying on of hands is

⁷⁴ Lindbladh, *Anointing as an Ordination Problem*, p79ff.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p89; Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p169.

⁷⁶ Lindbladh, *Anointing as an Ordination Problem*, p108ff, 129ff.

⁷⁷ Pope Leo XIII, ‘*Apostolicae Curae*’.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Pope Pius XII, ‘*Sacramentum Ordinis*’.

⁸⁰ ARC/USA, ‘Anglican Orders’, p509ff.

described in general terms, not only in relation to ordination, and is said to be a:

Biblical act which is rich in significance. It may mean (among other things) identification, commissioning or welcome. It is used in a variety of contexts: Confirmation, reconciliation, healing and ordination. On the one hand, by the laying on of hands with prayer a gift of grace already given by God is recognized and confirmed; on the other hand it is perfected for service.⁸¹

The laying on of hands is made in fidelity with the biblical witness – an argument that has accompanied the laying on of hands in the liturgical discussion throughout history. Ordination is not completed solely because of the laying on of hands, which is used in other settings as well; and this makes the content of the ordination's *form* and *intention* vital.

As in traditional sacramental theology, in the PCS it is the *materia* in combination with the *forma* that makes ordination effective and expresses the church's intention for the ministry to which the ordinand is ordained. With the same *materia* but with another *forma* or prayer and *intentio*, the act would still be a liturgical one, but not necessarily ordination. Since the PCS does not deal specifically with the rites of ordination, it does not say much about the particular form or the wording of the ordination prayer. Instead, the rites of ordination are dealt with in the essays published with the agreement. Even though the PCS does not present any of the churches' ordinations rites, it still describes the content of the ordination's *forma* in its emphasis that ordination includes the laying on of hands – i.e., its *materia* – in combination with the invocation of the Holy Spirit – i.e., its *forma*. This is consistent with a basic feature in the PCS that understands church as a life of and in the Holy Spirit. In accordance with this, the PCS sees the *forma* of the ordination in these terms: "at the laying on of hands by the ordaining bishop and other representatives with prayer, the whole Church calls upon God in confidence of his promise to pour out the Holy Spirit on his covenant people (Is 11.1-3, cf. Veni Creator Spiritus)".⁸² This is ecclesologically important for the intention and understanding of ordained ministry as a ministry in and for the whole church.

The intention of ordination, as understood in the PCS, is not limited to the explicit use of the term 'intention'. The concept is used seven times in the statement, not only in relation to *ordination* and *consecration*, and the *intentio* of ordination is described without using the term. *Intention* is used once in relation to the laying on of hands at ordination,⁸³ and six times it describes the intention to live in fidelity to and continuity with the Church of Christ.⁸⁴

⁸¹ PCS §47.

⁸² PCS §47.

⁸³ PCS §47.

⁸⁴ PCS §§32*k*, 34, 41, 48 and 49.

The PCS's use of *intentio* is, as described earlier,⁸⁵ crucial to the Porvoo solution, which argues that even though in the course of history episcopal succession in the western Nordic churches was not retained, "the interruption of the episcopal succession has, nevertheless, in these particular churches always been accompanied by the *intention* and by measures to secure the apostolic continuity of the Church as a Church of the gospel served by an episcopal ministry".⁸⁶

Since the Council of Florence (1438-1445), the right *materia, forma* and *intentio* have been regarded as essential characteristics of ordination and as requisites for a valid ordination and ordained ministry, although the concept of validity has been seen differently. The PCS describes ordination as a charismatic act (*forma*) conducted through the laying on of hands by the ordaining bishop(s) (*materia*), which intends to transmit and create a new minister of the church (*intentio*).⁸⁷ In ordination, through the laying on of hands, together with the prayer and God's action through the Holy Spirit, the ordinand "receives the sign of divine approval and a permanent commission to lead his particular church in the common faith and apostolic life of all churches".⁸⁸ In several sections it is stated that by the prayer and the laying on of hands the ministry (§24) or a person (§41) is *set apart* (§24) or *set aside* for a lifelong office (§41). The act of ordination that is conducted through the laying on of hands and prayer sets a person apart since it is, as emphasised in §48, an effective act that "transmits ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God's will and institution".

Given this description of ordination in the PCS, an ordination conducted by someone other than an ordained bishop would not be regarded as valid. The PCS also states that the mutual recognition of ordained ministers refers to episcopally ordained ministers.⁸⁹ However, as we know, the PCS states that bishops ordained outside the line of manual episcopal succession can still be regarded as authentic bishops. That conclusion is not unconditional, but is based on the ecclesiological understanding in the PCS and on the assumption that "the continuity signified in the consecration of a bishop to episcopal ministry cannot be divorced from the continuity of life and witness of the diocese to which he is called"⁹⁰; and "faithfulness to the apostolic calling of the whole church is carried by more than one means of continuity".⁹¹ The ecclesiological approach, and the PCS's emphasis that continuity is carried by more than manual episcopal succession, opens up the issue of *ecclesiological validation*. Another important aspect of the Porvoo solution

⁸⁵ See Chapter 2.5.8. and Chapter 7.6.

⁸⁶ PCS §34 (my italic).

⁸⁷ See PCS §§47-48.

⁸⁸ PCS §48.

⁸⁹ PCS §58 *b(v)*.

⁹⁰ PCS §49.

⁹¹ PCS §52.

is its emphasis on *intentio*. Altogether it means that the Porvoo solution is contextual, and cannot be applied unconditionally in other contexts.

While this section describes the issue of *ritual validation* in general and in relation to how ordination is understood in the PCS, it also needs to be applied specifically to the problem the PCS claims to solve, which is the supposed presbyteral ordinations conducted by Bugenhagen in the 16th century, as well as how this history is described in the PCS. The history of Bugenhagen and the ordinations in Denmark is related to the 16th century perception of ordained ministry, which, in turn, relates to how ecclesiology, ordination and ordained ministry were understood in the early church. This historical link simultaneously opens up the issue for ecclesiological validation in pneumatological and communal perspective. First, however, we need to consider the ministerial status of Johannes Bugenhagen.

14.2.3. Was Bugenhagen a presbyter or a bishop?

The aim of the PCS is to solve “the longstanding problem about episcopal ministry and its relation to succession”.⁹² At the centre of this problem was the supposed breach in episcopal succession in the western Nordic churches in 1537, and the consequence that those churches have valued episcopal succession differently from the other Porvoo churches. Those differences were why prior to the PCS, the CoE had different ecumenical agreements with the Nordic-Baltic churches. These agreements were focused on ‘pipeline’ succession and ritual validation. Likewise, the approach to Bugenhagen in the Porvoo debate was based upon *ritual validation*. Because of the importance *intentio* is given in the Porvoo solution, it is crucial to investigate what actually happened when the Danish church ordained seven superintendents in 1537. According to the PCS, the intention was to secure the church’s apostolic continuity. Was this the case? And how should Bugenhagen’s role in the ordinations be understood? Was he a mere presbyter? Or is it possible to regard Bugenhagen’s ordinations as valid? The PCS describes what happened in 1537 in these terms:

In some of the territories the historic succession of bishops was maintained by episcopal ordination, whereas elsewhere on a few occasions bishops or superintendents were consecrated by priests following what was believed to be the precedent of the early Church. One consequence of this was a lack of unity between the ministries of our churches and thus a hindrance to our common witness, service and mission.⁹³

Likewise, in §52 the PCS states that “a church which has preserved the sign of historic episcopal succession is free to acknowledge an authentic episco-

⁹² PCS §34.

⁹³ PCS §34. Cf. ALIC, ‘Niagara’, p103f, §§54–57.

pal ministry in a church which has preserved continuity in the episcopal office by an occasional priestly/presbyteral ordination at the time of the Reformation". The same view is described by Gerhard Pedersen in his essay in *Together in Mission and Ministry*. Pedersen writes that, through the ordination conducted by Bugenhagen, "the episcopal succession according to canon law was broken, as Bugenhagen was an ordained priest but had not been consecrated bishop".⁹⁴ Halliburton refers to Bugenhagen as "a man in priest's orders but exercising a superintendent ministry".⁹⁵ However, considering the history of the Wittenberg reformer, this description of Bugenhagen as merely a priest is not accurate.

I have described how Halliburton also stated that Bugenhagen in fact was an ordained superintendent and not only a priest.⁹⁶ It is noteworthy that Halliburton described this in an article written after the PCS's publication and after the Porvoo debates in most of the Porvoo churches. I have researched three articles by Halliburton. In the first, published in *Together in Mission and Ministry* in 1993, Halliburton did not mention the ordination of Bugenhagen; this is done only in his later articles of 1996 and 1998. It appears that Halliburton found more material about Bugenhagen's ordination after the PCS had been published. In 1993 Halliburton stated that "it has to be remembered that the Danish succession has been continued unbroken since 1537, which in itself is a sure indication of intent to continue what always had been".⁹⁷ In contrast, in 1998 he argued that "it is most likely that the fullness of apostolic succession was maintained in Denmark".⁹⁸ Halliburton's description is correct. Bugenhagen was ordained superintendent by the *presbyterium* in Wittenberg in 1528,⁹⁹ and he considered his office to be an episcopal one.¹⁰⁰ The ordination was conducted on the precedence of the early church and with the medieval presbyteral understanding of ordained ministry. Both were based on the witness of Jerome. As described in Chapter 13.3, the use of the Latin term for 'overseer' was not an objection against the episcopal order of the church and, as we shall see, the Latin and Greek terms were used interchangeably.

The Reformation in Denmark, as in the rest of the Porvoo region, has to be understood from a political and economic perspective. King Christian III, like Gustav Vasa in Sweden and Henry VIII in England, clearly had political and economic reasons for supporting the Reformation cause. When Christian III became King in August 1536, one of his first acts was:

⁹⁴ Pedersen, 'Episcopacy in Our Churches: Denmark', p86.

⁹⁵ Halliburton, 'Orders and Ordination', p158.

⁹⁶ Chapter 7.6.

⁹⁷ Halliburton, 'Orders and Ordination', p161.

⁹⁸ Halliburton, 'Bishops Together in Mission and Ministry', p255.

⁹⁹ See chapter 7.6. and Hendel, 'Johannes Bugenhagen', p35, 61; ALIC, 'Niagara', p104, §56.

¹⁰⁰ Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1998, II:p33; Halliburton, 'Bishops Together in Mission and Ministry', p258f.

To confiscate episcopal property and thus to abolish the power of the bishops who were the major proponents of the Roman Church as well as Christian's most powerful opponents. Christian needed the episcopal lands to pay his troops and to replenish his depleted treasury. While the weakening of the bishops clearly contributed to the success of the Reformation movement, both Luther and Bugenhagen encouraged the King to use the confiscated ecclesiastical property properly[, for the church and her care for the people].¹⁰¹

Due to the political situation and the fact that the bishops, both ordained and non-ordained, were imprisoned for several years for their political involvement, it was not an option to reinstall the existing hierarchy, nor to turn to Rome for new bishops. Instead Christian turned to Germany and asked for a bishop who could rightly crown him and his Queen, ordain new bishops for the episcopal sees, and organise the Danish church in the new situation. Bugenhagen was sent to Copenhagen as, in the words of Luther, "the bishop of the church of Wittenberg and the legate of Christ in Denmark".¹⁰² It is hard to imagine a more clearly-formulated episcopal arrogation. Bugenhagen arrived in Copenhagen on 5 July 1537. He stayed for two years, crowned the King and Queen on 12 August 1537,¹⁰³ and ordained seven bishops/superintendents for the episcopal sees in Denmark on 2 September 1537.¹⁰⁴ On the same day Christian III approved a new church order that Danish theologians had written in cooperation with Bugenhagen. During the next two years Bugenhagen rebuilt the University of Copenhagen. In 1541, when the episcopal see of Schleswig became vacant, Christian III offered Bugenhagen the position; however, he declined.¹⁰⁵

That the intention was to ordain bishops is clear in the ordination ritual described in the church order of 1537, published in Latin and followed by a Danish translation in 1539. The ritual in the church order for the ordination of bishops uses the term *superintendent* in the rubrics, but in the description of the office it uses *bishop* and in the ordination prayer it states that the *electus* is ordained to the episcopal office in the Church.¹⁰⁶ In the years following the ordinations the term *superintendent* was used in official Danish docu-

¹⁰¹ Hendel, 'Johannes Bugenhagen', p60.

¹⁰² Kretschmar, *Das bischöfliche Amt*, p195, 215.

¹⁰³ Hendel, 'Johannes Bugenhagen', p60f.

¹⁰⁴ Lorentzen, *Johannes Bugenhagen als Reformator der öffentlichen Fürsorge*, p39. Pedersen states that the ordinations were conducted on 2 July 1536. This date seems not to be accurate, since Bugenhagen arrived first on 5 July 1537. Pedersen, 'Episcopacy in Our Churches: Denmark', p86.

¹⁰⁵ Hendel, 'Johannes Bugenhagen', p59ff, 64.

¹⁰⁶ Lausten, 'Ordinatio Ecclesiastica Regnorum Daniae et Norwegiae 1537', p143. "Nos tuam immensam bonitatem precamur, vt clementer respicias hunc famulum tuum, quem as Episcopale officium eligimus". The church order of 1537 was translated into Danish in 1539 and states: "Saa bede wy nu din wsigelige godhed, at du naadelig wilt ansee denne din tienere N. huilken wy wdi dit naffn wduelige til det hellige biscoplig embede vdi kircken". See Lausten, 'Den danske kirkeordinans, 1539', p243. See also Pedersen, 'Episcopacy in Our Churches: Denmark', p86.

ments, often as an apposition to the term *right bishops*. The term *bishop* never ceased to be used in Denmark, and soon *superintendent* was not used at all.¹⁰⁷

Strangely enough, the ordination of Bugenhagen in Wittenberg is not mentioned by Pedersen, nor by the PCS. It appears that the Wittenberg ordination was not known in the Porvoo process before Halliburton found new evidence.¹⁰⁸ Apparently, the fact that Bugenhagen was an ordained superintendent has not been seen as important in the modern Danish context. As an example, the ordination is not mentioned in *Kirkens historie (The History of the Church)* of 2012, which only states that “Bugenhagen was not ordained bishop, so every idea of apostolic succession was abandoned”.¹⁰⁹ This view of the Danish church historian Bach-Nielsen is anachronistic and ideological.¹¹⁰ It might be that his interpretation have been a common way in Denmark to describe the Reformation process,¹¹¹ and a way to justify its own tradition in contrast to ‘pipeline’ interpretations. However, the reformers’ perspective was that they followed the custom of the early church in order to give the church true bishops concerned with the pastoral leadership of the church. In consequence, the ordinations conducted by Bugenhagen were not seen as a break in episcopal succession; rather, he was regarded as “the bishop of the church of Wittenberg and the legate of Christ” who was ordaining new bishops for the Church of Christ in Denmark. Whether the reformers were right in their perceptions of the early church is another thing, but it is hard to deny that the intention was to ordain bishops.

Given this greater knowledge of the Danish church’s history, it might be asked how this would have influenced the formulation of the PCS. My view is that it is likely that it would not have changed the Porvoo solution, but it is probable that the break in the 16th century had been described differently, because the ordinations conducted by Bugenhagen were not presbyteral, but conducted by an ordained superintendent/bishop. Since the validity of a superintendent ordained by a *presbyterium* in Wittenberg or in Denmark may be valued the same, this argument is primarily an argument about the intention of the Danes, and the focus changes from the question whether Bugenhagen’s ordinations in Denmark are valid, to whether or not the ordination of Bugenhagen, conducted by the *presbyterium* in Wittenberg, can be regarded

¹⁰⁷ Pedersen, ‘Episcopacy in Our Churches: Denmark’, p87.

¹⁰⁸ The ordination is mentioned by Kretschmar, Hendel and Puglisi. Lorentzen does not mention the ordination of Bugenhagen, but his focus is on church orders, not on ordained ministry. However, Niagara §56 states that “the ministry of oversight in the (Wittenberg) *Stadtkirche* was described as an episcopal office”.

¹⁰⁹ Bach-Nielsen and Schjørring, *Kirkens historie*, 2:p122.

¹¹⁰ Cf. Kretschmar, *Das bischöfliche Amt*, p198. Bach-Nielsen tones down and describes the ordination of the seven superintendents as ‘inaugurations’ (*indviedes*), in contrast with the ordination ritual that Bugenhagen used.

¹¹¹ Cf. Chapter 5.4.1.

as valid. There are a few factors that may indicate such recognition, and strengthen the approach of the PCS.

Against such recognition is the historical fact that Bugenhagen was not ordained by bishops in succession and in the wider communion of the church. In favour of such recognition is the clear intention to ordain bishops for the churches of Wittenberg and Denmark, conducted on the precedence of the early church and based on the medieval presbyteral concept of ordained ministry. Still, it is possible to argue that Bugenhagen was not ordained by bishops in succession, but by the *presbyterium* of Wittenberg.

The Danish case is, at least in a way, strengthened by the knowledge that through history there have been presbyteral ordinations of priests in all the Porvoo churches, as in the RCC. The CoE occasionally accepted presbyterally-ordained ministers until 1662; since then only episcopally ordained ministers are allowed to serve in the CoE.¹¹² As noted in Chapter 2, more than 60 priests, ordained by Danish bishops, served in the Anglican mission to India between 1728 and 1825. In the CoS, there existed from the 16th century superintendents parallel with the episcopate as an attempt by King Gustav Vasa to replace the episcopal order with a more German-inspired church order. The attempt did not succeed. Some of the superintendents, who were only presbyters, did ordain new priests in their jurisdictional areas – primarily in occupied areas. This was done on delegation, not from the pope, but from the King, and because of the spiritual importance the King was given as crowned and anointed during the medieval time.¹¹³ The practice of having superintendents alongside bishops was finally abandoned in 1772. Most superintendents were not given *potestas ordinis*, and when they were transferred to an episcopal see, they were episcopally ordained.¹¹⁴ In the RCC, presbyteral ordination of priests on delegation from the pope was possible as late as in the canon law of 1917,¹¹⁵ finally replaced by the Code of Canon Law of 1983, which represents the position of Vatican II on this point. This practice mirrored the medieval presbyteral conception of ordained ministry and the separation of jurisdiction and sacramentality which emerged in the early medieval period. One difference between this history of presbyteral ordinations in the CoE, the CoS, the RCC, and the ordination of Bugenhagen in Wittenberg, is that Bugenhagen was ordained to an episcopal ministry, while the others were ordinations to the presbyterate. Still, it is important to note that in the history of ordination and ordained ministry, there have been irregularities in all the churches in the Porvoo debate without the validity of those presbyteral ordinations being called into question.

¹¹² Norris Jr., 'Episcopacy', p342.

¹¹³ Brodd, 'Superintendenturen som ersättning', p221ff.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., p229.

¹¹⁵ CIC 1917, Canon 951.

A consideration of the ordination praxis in the early church and of the medieval concept of ordained ministry, strengthens the Danish case further. As noted in Chapter 13.3, there is no doubt that the reformers firmly believed that they were acting according to a tradition going back to apostolic times, when they ordained superintendents as overseers in the Evangelic parishes. This was done on the precedent of the early church and the witness of Jerome, as well as on the basis of the presbyteral conception of ordained ministry described by Lombard. Historically the reformers were right that – as described by Jerome – the church in Alexandria and Egypt did not use the same episcopal ordination practice as in other parts of the early church. At least until the 3rd century the bishop of Alexandria seems to have been chosen and ordained by the *presbyterium* of Alexandria and not ordained by neighbouring bishops.¹¹⁶ The custom seems to have been quite exclusive to Alexandria, was not widespread in the early church, and seems to have been eliminated entirely by the time of Augustine.¹¹⁷ Alexandria was, however, not alone in this practice in the early church, but the custom lasted longer there than in other local churches, in which it mainly disappeared during the 2nd century. It is, for example, likely that Irenaeus was not ordained bishop in *successio manum*, but by the local *presbyterium*.¹¹⁸ The practice in Alexandria was used later by Jerome, followed by Lombard, to support the view that basically a bishop was nothing more than a presbyter. The RC theologian James F. McCue has commented on the Alexandrian custom:

One could not directly conclude that in Alexandria there could have been no notion of episcopal apostolic succession. Apostolic succession as succession to an apostolic chair would be reconcilable with Alexandrian practice; but apostolic succession as the transmission of authority and/or power through consecration by bishops would not be reconcilable.¹¹⁹

McCue contrasts *successio sedis* and *successio manuum* as two different understandings of episcopal succession. The PCS emphasises both of those aspects, which reveals an important difference between the German and the Danish Reformation. While the superintendents in the German areas were organised in parallel with the existing dioceses and bishops and in the hope that they could be integrated into the existing hierarchy, the superintendents/bishops ordained in Denmark were ordained for the existing episcopal sees and dioceses of the Danish church. That difference is important in the argumentation of the PCS, which states in §49:

¹¹⁶ Telfer, 'Episcopal Succession in Egypt'; Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p32, note 58.; Lécuyer, 'Le problème des consécérations épiscopales dans l'Eglise d'Alexandrie'.

¹¹⁷ McCue, 'Apostles and Apostolic Succession', p168.

¹¹⁸ Molland, 'Irenaeus of Lugdunum and the Apostolic Succession', p28.

¹¹⁹ McCue, 'Apostles and Apostolic Succession', p168.

The continuity signified in the consecration of a bishop to episcopal ministry cannot be divorced from the continuity of life and witness of the diocese to which he is called. In the particular circumstances of our churches, the continuity represented by the occupation of the historic sees is more than personal. The care to maintain a diocesan and parochial pattern of pastoral life and ministry reflects an intention of the churches to continue to exercise the apostolic ministry of word and sacrament of the universal Church.

[Likewise it is stated in paragraph 52 that] faithfulness to the apostolic calling of the whole Church is carried by more than one means of continuity. Therefore a church which has preserved the sign of historic episcopal succession is free to acknowledge an authentic episcopal ministry in a church which has preserved continuity in the episcopal office by an occasional priestly/presbyteral ordination at the time of the Reformation.¹²⁰

According to the PCS, *successio sedis*, in combination with the *intentio* to maintain the apostolic ministry, compensates for possible *deficiencies* in the *successio manuum*. Given that the PCS offers an ecclesiological solution, this notion should not be interpreted in isolation, but should be pneumatologically and ecclesologically integrated, as I will elaborate further below.

If the *successio sedis* understanding was represented by the church in Alexandria, the emphasis on both *successio sedis* and *successio manuum* is represented by Hippolytus and his *Apostolic Tradition*, which can be seen as a description of the ordinary practice of the early church in contrast to the irregular situation in Alexandria. Ordination in the *Apostolic Tradition* is described in an ecclesologically integrated way, involving the local faithful in the entire ordination process of their episcopal leader. They could, however, not ordain themselves. Instead they needed the participation of other bishops, because, according to the *Apostolic Tradition*, the bishop is not alone in episcopal responsibility. The presence of the neighbouring bishops had a twofold meaning. First, the neighbouring bishops received the person elected among them as a colleague chosen to represent the faith of this local Church, affirming the catholicity and apostolicity of the faith of the new bishop and his church. Secondly, the bishops are the ministers of the gift of the Spirit, which is given by the imposition of their hands (cf. PCS §47-48). It is not the bishops who make the elected person a bishop, but the Spirit. The bishops are witnesses to the activity of the Spirit in the church, and they are ministers of the charism received by the new bishop.¹²¹ With this view of episcopal ordination in the early church, the perspective has opened for *ecclesiological validation*.

Based on the tension between the custom of Alexandria and the wider early church, it may be stated, tentatively for now, that if it was possible in the early church to merge the two customs and integrate the episcopacy of Alex-

¹²⁰ PCS §§49, 52.

¹²¹ Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition*, p24ff, §§2ff.; Bradshaw, *Rites of Ordination*, p63; Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p38.

andria into the college of bishops of the wider church, that might be possible also in the context of the Porvoo churches, in order to restore the unity of the Church. That conclusion leads to the issue of *ecclesiological validation*, because from the PCS's perspective, *successio manuum*, *successio sedis* and *successio doctrinae* should not be interpreted in isolation, but within the pneumatological reality of the whole Church.

14.3. Ecclesiological validation

Important for the issue of *ecclesiological validation* is how ecclesiology has developed during the 20th century and how the PCS and the Porvoo debate relate to that development. First in this section, this background will be described, before I show in three sub-sections how ecclesiological validation affects the understanding of the Porvoo solution.

Apart from *ritual validation*, as described above, it was suggested in the early 1970s that validation might also be *charismatic* and *ecclesiological*. In the same document, *Faith & Order* also pointed beyond those three models to *ecclesia supplet* and the *oikonomia* of the church. The reflections of *Faith & Order* were an indication of the direction in which ecclesiology was developing and has continued to evolve since then.¹²² I described briefly in the second chapter how the *comparative method* of the early ecumenical movement was complemented with a *christological method* that stated that unity was to be found in Christ beyond the confessional identities of the various denominations. The christological method, or perhaps better, approach to the unity of the church, is by its very nature ecclesiological. From a christological and Trinitarian perspective, the church is primarily understood as a *communio*. That ecclesiological understanding already anticipated a further important dimension of the church, which I referred to in Chapter 2 as the third phase of the ecumenical movement. In order to understand fully the church as a *communio* of Christ and in Trinitarian perspective, it is also necessary to understand the church, not only from a *christological*, but also a *pneumatological* perspective. The evolved ecclesiology continued the broadening from a fragmented possessive ecclesiology to a holistic and fiducial ecclesiology, which could more fully express the church's communal nature – but also, as we shall see, the church's eschatological nature.

As with the breakthrough of the christological phase, the elaboration and implementation of a more elaborated pneumatological ecclesiology has been slow and remains ongoing. In the first half of the 20th century fragmented ecclesiology, either in institutionalised (RC) or individualised (protestant)

¹²² E.g. Kärkkäinen, *An Introduction to Ecclesiology*, p95ff; Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*; Kasper, *The Catholic Church*; Volf, *After Our Likeness*.

form, was seen as a problem.¹²³ This was an important move in the direction of loosening up a problematic objectification of sacraments and doctrine in the church focused on juridical validity,¹²⁴ without, however, managing to overcome the issue of different orders and their validation. There are several factors influencing this evolution: new insights derived from exegetical and patristic research; the influence of Orthodox theology, not the least due to the involvement of the Orthodox churches in the WCC; and the rapid growth of Pentecostal and charismatic movements. In ecumenical dialogues, Orthodox theologians have criticised western ecclesiology for having forgotten the Spirit, resulting in a *christomonistic* notion of church and ordained ministry – that is, an exclusively christological view of the church based solely on the incarnation.¹²⁵ As a consequence of this pneumatological deficiency, the church appears one-sidedly as an hierarchical institution (RC) or, on the other hand, as an individualised ecclesiology that lacks a social and corporate body (Protestant). Paradoxically, the Protestant view also leads to an institutionalised notion, in practice identifying the church primarily with ordained ministry.¹²⁶

The charge against western ecclesiology as *christomonistic* may simply serve to point out a western deficiency, but may not actually be a fair description. As Congar has demonstrated,¹²⁷ the Spirit has also been considered in western ecclesiology. The problem has been that the Spirit has been practically subordinated and added to an christologically-formulated ecclesiology.¹²⁸ This meant, in contrast to the early church, that in the second millennium pneumatology tended to become a function of ecclesiology, not the other way around. In Chapter 9.4 I described how a fragmented ecclesiology produced a possessive approach towards the Spirit, unlike a fiducial ecclesiology, which treats pneumatology as an integrated and determining theme. The Spirit has always been emphasised as an important and uniting factor, but the difference is that pneumatology has increasingly been seen as an essential dimension of the whole of theology and ecclesiology, not just as one chapter of theology or as something added to the church. Scripture itself teaches that the *anamnesis* of Jesus' passion and death must be the work of the Spirit in believers (John 14.26; Rom 8.9f) and that the presence of Christ apart from the Spirit is unthinkable (1 Cor 12.13).¹²⁹ In two distinct formulations of Zizioulas, this means that "pneumatology does not refer to the well-being

¹²³ See e.g. Brodd, 'The Church as Sacrament in the Writings of Yngve Brilioth'.

¹²⁴ See Chapter 14.1, Chapter 14.3.3, and e.g. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p243.

¹²⁵ Most clearly articulated by the Greek Orthodox theologian and WCC official Nikos A. Nissiotis, following Vladimir Lossky. Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, p67.

¹²⁶ Eckerdal, *Folkkyrkans kropp*, p278ff.

¹²⁷ Congar, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit. Vol.1, The Holy Spirit in the 'Economy'*, p152ff.

¹²⁸ Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, p79.

¹²⁹ Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p251.

but to the very being of the church”,¹³⁰ and that that the church is “instituted” by Christ, but “con-stituted” by the Spirit.¹³¹

As a consequence of the developed ecclesiology and an increasing dissatisfaction with the reliability of ‘ritual validation’ the theory of ‘pipeline’ succession has increasingly been seen as a problem during the 20th century,¹³² either as a rejection of its association with episcopal succession (the Protestant position), or as an affirmation of episcopal succession seen in a broader ecclesiological perspective (the catholic position). According to the latter position, apostolicity cannot be identified solely with episcopal succession, but must be understood in a broader ecclesiological perspective. During that period there were various attempts to overcome the tension between ecclesial recognition on the one hand and, on the other hand, the insistence on threefold ministry, in Anglican, in the CoS and, more recently, in RC ecclesiology.¹³³ The Anglican view was formulated in the 1920 Lambeth Conference and restated in the Meissen agreement. The CoS view was formulated by the Bishops’ Conference in 1922. The RC tension was formulated in the Vatican II documents,¹³⁴ as described by Cardinal Ratzinger when he noted that the salvific presence of Christ could be recognised in the sacraments of non-episcopal churches.¹³⁵ All of those three positions may be regarded as attempts to deal with the inter-ecclesial tension arising from the interim situation caused by the Reformation – without, however, sufficiently solving the issue of validation.

As I described at the beginning of Chapter 13, this ecclesiological broadening was affirmed in different ways by the majority in the Porvoo debate. The ecclesiological broadening contains, in one way or another, a relativising of episcopal succession, because if apostolicity cannot be exclusively identified with episcopal succession, it means that apostolicity is also expressed through other ordinances of the church. This means that episcopal succession alone is not *sufficient* for the apostolic continuity of the church – which raises the question, often asked in the Porvoo debate, whether or not episcopal succession is necessary for the apostolicity of the church.¹³⁶ That question also contains the question how the Porvoo solution should be understood.

In the Porvoo debate, Mary Tanner explained the Porvoo solution by a metaphor. She described the church and its apostolic tradition as a rope with many threads, which can compensate if one of them is missing. At the same

¹³⁰ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p132.

¹³¹ Ibid., p140; see also Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p18f.

¹³² Chapter 14; see also e.g. Burkhard, *Apostolicity Then And Now*, 35ff.

¹³³ See BEM and the bilateral dialogues, e.g. ARCIC, ‘Ministry and Ordination’, p83f, §17.

¹³⁴ See 13.5 and 14.1 on *defectus ordinis*; and Fries and Rahner, *Unity of the Churches*, p128ff; Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p379ff.

¹³⁵ Ratzinger, ‘Briefwechsel von Landesbischof Hanselmann und Cardinal Ratzinger’, p348; Cf. John Paul II, *Ut Unum Sint*, §11; RCC, ‘Lumen Gentium’, p21, §15.

¹³⁶ See Chapter 6.4.2 and Chapter 6.5.2.

time, she emphasised that episcopal succession is not an optional extra for the church. While her metaphor describes the PCS's emphasis on the importance of *intentio* and *successio sedis* as possibly compensating for an eventual lack in the *materia* and *successio manuum*, it does not fully do the PCS's ecclesiological approach justice.

The approaches of the CoE and the RCC could be described as regarding episcopal succession as *necessary, but not sufficient*, while the CoS has answered that episcopal succession is seen as a gift from God, but is not strictly regarded as necessary (*iure divino*) for the unity of the church. This has in practice meant, paradoxically, that episcopacy in succession has been regarded as necessary for and in the CoS, but not for other churches. This issue has never been theologically solved in the CoS. Positively, Root described the Swedish position as an early attempt to overcome the difficulties with a 'pipeline' approach, without reducing episcopal succession to a mere adiaphora.¹³⁷ The aim of the PCS is to overcome those positions that contain tensions and contradictions through a deeper ecclesiological understanding. The Porvoo solution could also be described as a *necessary, but not sufficient* position that is open, however, to other possible ways of validation than a strict line of episcopal ordinations. In the Porvoo debate, Root especially emphasised the PCS as a *necessary, but not sufficient* position,¹³⁸ which encapsulated the PCS's developed ecclesiology better than did Tanner's rope metaphor. He elaborated on the notion: "Even if no element of continuity is an infallible, sufficient criterion of continuity, it may still be that certain elements are necessary, i.e. they do not guarantee continuity, but there is no continuity without them".¹³⁹

In the Porvoo debate, those holding the ontological position criticised the Porvoo solution as not consistent with catholic teaching. While they agreed that succession is carried by more than one means, they disagreed that other means can compensate if episcopal succession is missing, because episcopacy is a necessary (without exception) although not sufficient sign.¹⁴⁰ Those theologians maintained that the Porvoo solution is impossible, and that *successio manuum* and *successio sedis* belong together as well, as true doctrine cannot be separated from episcopal succession.

Much of the ecumenical discussion of those questions has merely pointed out the inadequacy of a 'pipeline' perception without any real suggestions of a solution. Others have suggested alternative interpretations.¹⁴¹ Common to all of those suggestions is that they have problems with ritual validation and

¹³⁷ See Chapter 6.1.

¹³⁸ Root, 'Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Their Broader Ecumenical Significance', p24.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Bouteneff, 'The Porvoo Common Statement', p242f. Chapters 6.4.2 and 6.5.2.

¹⁴¹ E.g. Fries and Rahner, *Unity of the Churches*, p115ff; Van Beeck, 'Towards an Ecumenical Understanding of the Sacraments'; Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, p80f.; Skodowski, *Romersk-katolsk tolkning av defectus ordinis*, p11ff.

broaden the issue ecclesiology. In the Porvoo debate, Roelvink described Porvoo as an *ecclesia supplet* solution, which had some spread in the discussion and to which I will return.¹⁴² In a comment on the problem, but not specifically about the PCS, Kasper has noted that church history demonstrates that episcopal succession is a sign of the true *traditio*, but not its guarantee. One or several bishops can deny *traditio* and fall away from *communio*. Kasper notes that it is a unanimous teaching, from Irenaeus and Augustine to Thomas Aquinas, that the church is obliged in such a situation to disobey the bishops; and he concludes:

The sign of *successio* does not invariably guarantee the *res*, i.e. the true *traditio*. The church and its theology took longer to perceive that the *res* – the Spirit who guarantees the true *traditio* – can be present even where the sign (whether *successio* or *communio*) is for some reason absent or not fully existent; the excessive authority attributed to Augustine on this question was definitely corrected only by Vatican II. We do, however, find this lapidary formulation in Thomas Aquinas: ‘God has not bound his power to the sacraments in such a way that it would be impossible for him to communicate the effect of the sacraments without the sacraments themselves.’¹⁴³

Kasper’s comment on Augustine concerns the objectification of the sacrament and the narrowing of pneumatology to which the theology of Augustine lead in the early medieval period.¹⁴⁴ I touched upon this development at the beginning of this chapter, and will return to it below.

Based on a pneumatologically motivated ecclesiology, Puglisi – who in principle was positive about the Porvoo solution – said that the PCS does not go far enough. It is still primarily preoccupied with the issue of securing the historical line of episcopal ordination. Instead, he suggested a more elaborated eschatological view of ordained ministry, which would make the question of valid ministry less focused on the issue of historical transference.¹⁴⁵ I will return to Puglisi’s critique in Chapter 15.

The ecclesiological approaches of Tanner, Root, Roelvink, Kasper and Puglisi – along with the suggestion of McDonnell and Faith & Order – open up the issue of validation to go beyond a mere ritual validation. Such an approach is described in the Lutheran-Roman Catholic dialogue. It is stated in *Malta* that a new awareness of the church’s historicity and eschatological nature has changed how the issue of apostolic succession is perceived.¹⁴⁶ The document was worked out in the aftermath of Vatican II, in which the former ecclesiology of the RCC, principally juridical and dominantly christological,

¹⁴² See Chapter 14.3.1.

¹⁴³ Kasper, *Leadership in the Church*, p126.; See also Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p200.

¹⁴⁴ Sattler, ‘Sacrament’, p794; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p348f.

¹⁴⁵ Puglisi, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p227ff.

¹⁴⁶ Chapter 2.3.1 and LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p181, §55f.

gave way to a vision of the church as a communion of persons and of particular churches within a trinitarian context. The writings of Vatican II are still an expression of the second phase of the ecumenical movement,¹⁴⁷ as the ecclesiology is built up in christological terms and pneumatology is added as a secondary feature.¹⁴⁸ The third phase means that ecclesiology is understood not only christologically but also pneumatologically.

Before the Porvoo solution is discussed in the perspective of ecclesiological validation and a pneumatological *communio* ecclesiology, it is important to investigate the different explanations of the Porvoo solution as *ecclesia supplet*, the *oikonomia* of the church, and *charismatic validation*. The approach should not be understood as if *ecclesia supplet* and *charismatic validation* had been replaced by ecclesiological validation; rather, the explanations of the Porvoo theologians presuppose a pneumatological ecclesiology. So far, this has not been sufficiently elaborated in the Porvoo debate. This does not mean that something new – i.e., pneumatology – is added to the PCS, because the ecclesiology in the PCS is pneumatologically formulated; it means that the *deeper understanding* of ecclesiology, “of apostolicity, of the episcopal office, and of historic succession as ‘sign’” spelled out in the PCS,¹⁴⁹ has so far not been fully explored in the various explanations of the Porvoo solution.

14.3.1. *Ecclesia supplet* and the economy of the Holy Spirit

In his presentation on the PCS, Roelvink stated that the Reformation split was not primarily about individual ordinations, but was a division of the whole body of Christ. Considering this history, he argued that a break in episcopal ordination can be restored without too much fuss by appealing to *ecclesia supplet*.¹⁵⁰ The meaning of this principle is that the church can compensate for what might be lacking in the individual case of a sacramental act. Roelvink’s interpretation was repeated and developed by Fuchs, who understood the Porvoo solution as “*ecclesia supplet* via the notion of intention”.¹⁵¹ She explained that, while the situation of the Danish ordinations in 1537 was extra-ordinary, the intention was ordinary. In her exegesis of the Porvoo solution, Fuchs combined *ecclesia supplet* with another principle in the western church: *intentio faciendi quod facit ecclesia*. Here someone can have the intention to do what the church does, without in fact taking account of the form prescribed by church order, caused, for example, by extreme circumstances. In this case the action is valid in terms of the whole church.¹⁵²

¹⁴⁷ See Chapter 2.1.

¹⁴⁸ McDonnell, ‘Pneumatology Overview’, p189.

¹⁴⁹ PCS Foreword §9.

¹⁵⁰ Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’.

¹⁵¹ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p302.

¹⁵² Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, 80.

Her description of the Porvoo solution comes close to my description in Chapter 14.2 of ritual validation and the role of *intentio* in compensating for the lack in *materia* of the ordination.

Against the PCS as an *ecclesia supplet* solution, it might be argued that in ordinary RC practice the concept is normally understood as a compensation in cases of formal juridical *deficiencies* – for example, when a priest hears confession even when his commission to a particular parish has ended.¹⁵³ In such cases it is possible to speak about *ecclesia supplet* – the church provides whatever is lacking – but, according to ordinary RC practice, it is not applicable in cases when the necessary matter or form of the sacrament is lacking. In those cases it is preferable to talk about God’s providence. Accordingly, the Porvoo solution cannot be understood as *ecclesia supplet*, since the PCS deals with a break in *successio manuum* as a necessary requisite for the validity of ordination. As understood by Roman Canon Law, *ecclesia supplet* operates with the model of ritual validation. This juridical approach has its roots in fragmented ecclesiology and its objectified notion of the sacraments. This means that, whether or not the PCS can be perceived as *ecclesia supplet*, the PCS should be understood in a broader and less juridical way.

In the Porvoo debate, Tavard rejected the PCS as an *ecclesia supplet* solution, although – like Roelvink and Fuchs – with a broader understanding of *ecclesia supplet* that emphasised the importance of intention. He stated that the principle normally is used when essential conditions of validity have been inadvertently omitted. According to Tavard, that was not the case in Denmark, where the “decision to go ahead with presbyteral ordinations of bishops was indeed deliberate”.¹⁵⁴ While Tavard is correct that the Danish decision was deliberate, his approach is an idealisation of the medieval European church, as well as an incorrect view of Danish history. The Danish situation was in turmoil, and several of the ‘bishops’, apart from their involvement in the civil war, were in fact not even ordained. The Danish ordinations were deliberate acts, but undertaken to safeguard the episcopal order of the Danish church province in an extra-ordinary situation. Further, the ordinations were conducted by a person who was regarded as “the bishop of the church of Wittenberg and the legate of Christ in Denmark”.¹⁵⁵ The remark of Tavard is not a sufficient argument against the Porvoo solution.

Both the juridical principle of *ecclesia supplet* and the phenomenon of non-ordained holders of episcopal sees can serve as examples of a problem in the western ecclesial tradition – that is, the early medieval separation of sacramentality and jurisdiction.¹⁵⁶ This separation had important conse-

¹⁵³ Miras, Rodríguez-Ocaña, and Marzoa, *Exegetical Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, I:p775.

¹⁵⁴ Tavard, ‘A Catholic Reflection on the Porvoo Statement’, p355.

¹⁵⁵ Kretschmar, *Das bischöfliche Amt*, p195, 215.

¹⁵⁶ E.g. Wood, *Sacramental Orders*, p14.

quences for the perception of episcopacy, and lay behind the separation of ordination and the juridical commission of the bishop-elect. During the medieval period the bishop-elect was often given the juridical commission long before he was ordained. As result, as in Denmark before the Reformation, many medieval 'bishops' were never ordained and did not bother to receive orders, since in any case they occupied the episcopal see, could administer it bureaucratically, and received income from one or even several dioceses.¹⁵⁷ Such contempt for the meaning of episcopal ministry is of course an expression of a grave deficiency in the intention of that ministry, as the use of the word *superintendent* as an apposition to *right bishop*, shows. The sacramental task of the bishop was instead taken care of by an *ordination bishop*. The *ordination bishop* was an ordained bishop, but did not occupy the episcopal chair and had no juridical power and received none of the incomes from the diocese. The separation of sacramental ordination and juridical commission, in the context of a fragmented ecclesiology, meant that *ecclesia supplet* came to be associated with juridical church order and not, as in the early church and in the Orthodox churches, with the *economy* of the church.¹⁵⁸

Due to the legal character of *ecclesia supplet*, it has been common in the ecumenical movement to turn to the principle of *oikonomia*, the 'twin' principle of the early church and maintained in the Orthodox churches.¹⁵⁹ The meaning of *oikonomia* is widely debated, and there is no comprehensive definition of the concept.¹⁶⁰ While *ecclesia supplet* concerns law, *oikonomia* is a theological principle about the power of the Spirit present in the community. That might imply that the Spirit can compensate for what is formally lacking in an individual ordination, if it finds its foundation in the sacramentality of the whole church. In the international discussion debate centres on whether the principle of *oikonomia* is applicable to the problem discussed in the PCS.¹⁶¹ This involves in practice different understandings of the principle. Just as there are different interpretations of *ecclesia supplet* in the West, ranging from a strictly legal understanding to a more sacramental one, so too in the East there are different exegeses of *oikonomia*, from strict interpretations that in practice come quite close to the juridical reading of *ecclesia supplet*, to more pneumatological interpretations that are open to God's providence.¹⁶²

Most theologians who have argued for a possible solution and a merging of churches with or without episcopal succession, have done so without the

¹⁵⁷ For example, in the 16th century in Cologne, a number of archbishops had never been ordained as bishops, see Kasper, 'Apostolic Succession in the Office of Bishop', p207.

¹⁵⁸ Schillebeeckx, *Ministry*, 80.

¹⁵⁹ See e.g. Faith & Order, *Louvain 1971*, p101.

¹⁶⁰ Orsy, 'In Search of the Meaning of Oikonomia', p314ff.

¹⁶¹ See e.g. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p245.

¹⁶² Orsy, 'In Search of the Meaning of Oikonomia', p314; Grdzeldze, 'Using the Principle of Oikonomia', p234ff.

use of *oikonomia*. Those attempts are ecclesiological and pneumatologically reasoned, which means that, even though the term has not been used, there is an advance towards the kind of ecclesiological thinking that lies behind *oikonomia* and goes beyond a more traditional western legal reflection.¹⁶³ This is because pneumatology is about the role of the Holy Spirit in the church, which is the inner reality of *oikonomia*. As noted above, Faith & Order pointed in the *Louvain Document* towards *ecclesia supplet* and *oikonomia* as possible ways forward, “even if the principle would have to be extended to situations where it has, as yet, never been applied”.¹⁶⁴ The understanding of *oikonomia* has importance for ecumenism, since the imperfect communion the churches experience is a contradiction of the economy of the Spirit. While all churches attest to the activity of the Spirit within them, no church can claim the Spirit as its own.¹⁶⁵ With this in mind, it should be remembered that the problem the PCS claims to solve through a more pneumatologically understood ecclesiology, was overcome in the early church in the relation between the church of Alexandria and the wider church.

In the perspective of a sacramental and pneumatological ecclesiology, the discussion whether the church could compensate for what is lacking in the individual celebration of a sacrament becomes a different one. In her interpretation of the Porvoo solution, Fuchs gives the Holy Spirit an important role in a charismatic understanding of ordination:

Porvoo turns to the liturgy for episcopal consecration to anchor its view of intention and sign. Porvoo attributes to the rite of episcopal consecration *per se* the important of bearing the *intentio* (to do what the apostles did), the *materia* (laying on of hands) and the *forma* (oration) which transmits episcopal consecration. Ritual takes the foreground, so to speak, because it expresses the *intentio* and *actio* of the church. In the middle-ground stands the candidate to be consecrated bishop, recipient of the sign. In the background is the minister conferring episcopacy, servant of the liturgical act. No mere nuance, this positioning effectively grounds *episcopate* in the apostolicity of the church, i.e. *successio in persona* within ecclesial succession of apostolic faith through all times and in all places, *in nomine ecclesiae*. Nothing in the Porvoo accord suggests a design by diplomacy method prompted by the ecclesio-political settings of the region. Its approach is ecclesiological, even sacramental, not political or bureaucratic.¹⁶⁶

While Fuchs’ approach does not make sense from the juridical perspective of ritual validation, it does make sense from the ecclesiological and pneumatological perspective. Fuchs did not use the term ‘charismatic’, nor did she explicitly discuss the role of pneumatology in the Porvoo solution, but she did regard it as a sacramental approach, in which the role of the Spirit is

¹⁶³ E.g. Kasper, ‘Zur Frage der Anerkennung der Ämter’, p107.

¹⁶⁴ Faith & Order, *Louvain 1971*, p101. See above chapter 14.1.

¹⁶⁵ Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p496.

¹⁶⁶ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p302f.

vital; and this in turn opens up the issue, beyond a narrow and objectified notion of the sacrament, to a participative approach of the whole church in the salvific mystery of Christ, i.e. for *ecclesiological validation*. First, however, the issue of *charismatic validation* suggested in the *Louvain Document* and by McDonnell needs to be considered in relation to ecclesiological validation.

14.3.2. Ordination and pneumatology

Besides *ritual* and *ecclesiological validation*, *charismatic validation* was suggested as a way to overcome the deadlock about mutual recognition. Due to the PCS's elaborated pneumatological understanding of the Church, I will, as noted above, interpret *charismatic validation* as more ecclesologically integrated than the Louvain document did.

Two perspectives are important for the issue of charismatic validation. The first, the original meaning of the concept when it was launched in the early 1970s, is a reminder that there were charismatic orders besides ordained ministry in the early church. That emphasis could be seen as a stage on the way to a more pneumatologically elaborated ecclesiology. The second is that if the church is seen from a pneumatological perspective, ordination has to be understood as a charismatic liturgical act. Such a view breaks down the claimed dichotomy between charismatic and institutional,¹⁶⁷ once introduced by Harnack,¹⁶⁸ of the first perspective. This is because, from the perspective of a pneumatological ecclesiology, it makes no sense to oppose charism and institution, for the church exists in and by the Spirit.¹⁶⁹ From this perspective the Church is a structured communion, but, as been described several times above,¹⁷⁰ that structure is analogous to any human institution or juridical power. It further means that it does not make sense to see *charismatic validation* in isolation, because the whole church is understood as a Spirit given *communio*,¹⁷¹ rather the “three ways” of validation are integrated parts of a greater ecclesiological whole as elaborated in the PCS.

Essential to the suggestion of a charismatic validation is the point that in the NT and the early church, the church was understood as a pneumatological community: the temple of the Spirit. The NT writings describe the important role of charismatic order in the early church (1 Cor 1-3, Acts 13:1f.). This order did not have its background in the apostolic ministry, but was motivated by the Spirit and recognised by the community. Based on the *Didache*, some scholars have said that those charismatics might have presided at

¹⁶⁷ See e.g. 1 Tim 3:2, 5:17, 2 Tim 2:2, Tit 1:9, Heb 13:7, Jas 5:14.

¹⁶⁸ von Harnack, *Die Lehre der zwölf Apostel*, II:p145ff.

¹⁶⁹ PCS §38; Congar, *The Word and the Spirit*, p64; Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p59.

¹⁷⁰ See e.g. Chapter 13.2; and LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p175, §31.

¹⁷¹ PCS §§19, 38, 47.

the eucharist, but this cannot be verified.¹⁷² From the perspective of the church seen as a charismatic community, ordained ministers were also regarded as charismatic, and first of all among those were the apostles (1 Cor. 12:28, Eph. 2:19f.).¹⁷³ When the early church encountered inner and outer threats from gnostic teachings, the concept of ‘charism’ was more exclusively identified with ordained ministry.

By the end of the 4th century, a charism was almost universally understood as the charism of ordained ministry.¹⁷⁴ As described in Chapter 14.2.3 on Hippolytus’ *Apostolic Tradition*, ordination in the early church was primarily seen as a charismatic event. The ordaining bishops were seen as witnesses to the activity of the Spirit, the one who made the *electus* a bishop.¹⁷⁵ This description should not be seen in isolation, but as an integral part of a pneumatological and eucharistic ecclesiology, which indicates an important difference in ecclesiology and sacramental theology from that of the medieval understanding.¹⁷⁶ Ordination was understood as a fresh outpouring of the Spirit in response to the prayer of the Church, not as a transference from ordainer to ordinand. How differently, both ecclesiologically and pneumatologically, ordination and commission were understood in the early church is described in the *Apostolic Tradition* in relation to the so-called *confessors* (people who had not betrayed the faith and had survived, in contrast to the *martyrs*). It was stated that a confessor should not be ordained by the imposition of hands, because by his confession he already shared in the honour of the presbyterate and the diaconate.¹⁷⁷

Admittedly, it seems likely that the recognition granted in the *Apostolic Tradition* was not a widespread custom.¹⁷⁸ Still, the description of the confessors is an important witness to a radically different view from the modern one based on ritual validation, and to the relatively lesser importance of the imposition of hands in the light of something more essential – namely, the activity of the Holy Spirit through their confession of the faith. Apparently, the ecclesial recognition of and ecclesial consensus about what had happened was regarded as more important than the mechanical imposition of hands. However, if such a person were chosen to be a bishop, hands would be laid upon him,¹⁷⁹ because at the ordination of a bishop other aspects are

¹⁷² Kasper, ‘Apostolic Succession in the Office of Bishop’, p204.

¹⁷³ McDonnell, ‘Ways of Validating Ministry’, p246.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p251.

¹⁷⁵ Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition*, p24ff, §§2–3; Bradshaw, *Rites of Ordination*, p63.

¹⁷⁶ See Chapter 9.4 and Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p136f.

¹⁷⁷ Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition*, p68, §9. “The confessor, if he was in bonds because of the name of the Lord, shall not have hand laid on him for diaconate or presbyterate, for he has the honour of the presbyterate by his confession”, and on p69, quoting *Canons of Hippolytus*: “He is not to be ordained by the bishop, because his confession is his ordination. But if he becomes bishop, he is to be ordained. ... Even though he has not received the mark of the presbyterate, he has received the spirit of the presbyterate.”

¹⁷⁸ See the comment to article 9 in Hippolytus, *The Apostolic Tradition*, p67.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p68, §9. “But if he is appointed bishop he will have hand laid on him”.

also involved apart from the issue of the passing on of the ministry through the Holy Spirit, that concern the issue of ecclesial recognition. I will come back to this issue in Chapter 15. The understanding of the confessors in the Apostolic Tradition functions as an important reminder of that the issue of ordination and the validity of ordained ministry need to be seen from various angles, not only the imposition of hands (*ritual validation*), including the whole interplay of pneumatology, ecclesiology, history, eschatology, ordination and the importance of ecclesial recognition (*ecclesiological validation*). That is what the PCS does in its ecclesiological, pneumatological/charismatic and ritual understanding of ordination and which results in mutual recognition of both church and ordained ministry.¹⁸⁰ This ecclesiological understanding needs to be considered further.

14.3.3. Church, history and eschatology

According to the PCS, episcopal succession is an expression of the continuity and permanence of the apostolic tradition of the Church as a whole.¹⁸¹ That continuity concerns the history of the Church, but also the fulfilment of history in the eschatological Kingdom of God.¹⁸² That broadening of the ecclesiological perspective is important for the question of validation and mutual recognition.

So far in this thesis, Tavard's question about how episcopal ministry can be transferred by someone who does not have it has mainly been discussed from an historical perspective and through a focus on *successio manuum* and validity – i.e., the critical question in the Porvoo solution. The PCS offers a critique of such a one-sided juridical approach, and emphasises the apostolic continuity of the whole life of the Church – what I have referred to as *substantive apostolicity* – and the importance of *intentio* for ordinations conducted irregularly. As we have seen, the *intentio* was to ordain Bugenhagen bishop of Wittenberg, who later ordained the new bishops for the Danish church. The ordination of Bugenhagen was based on the medieval understanding of ordained ministry, which in turn was based on the medieval knowledge of the early church and the fragmented ecclesiology of the time. I have described how the focus in the church of Alexandria in the first three centuries was not on *successio manuum*, but on *successio sedis*. In contrast, the *Apostolic Tradition* emphasises both, but considers the *confessors* also as ordained, however, without the imposition of hands and due to their confession and the Holy Spirit. The traditional Lutheran perspective has been focused more on what has been called *successio doctrinae*, although – as stated in Chapter 13 – the Lutheran confessions do also operate with the notion of

¹⁸⁰ PCS §§56-58.

¹⁸¹ PCS §39 and §36, quoting BEM, M§34.

¹⁸² PCS §36.

ministerial succession, and the eastern Nordic churches have always regarded the episcopal ministry as a gift of the Holy Spirit through the ages. Ordination understood as a charismatic act means further that the main actor in the ordination is the Holy Spirit, not the bishop, who is more the witness to the Spirit's action. I have also touched upon the fact that all those aspects are integrated in the concept of *substantive apostolicity* of a Church, which is understood from a communal and pneumatological perspective. That was the understanding of the early church and of the PCS.

When the Church is understood from a communal and pneumatological perspective, new aspects of the issue of apostolic succession open up beyond the earlier christological – and thus institutionally-based – approaches. One is that the Church understood as a historical community is challenged by the Church understood as an eschatological community. The eschatological view is a consequence of a pneumatologically understanding of ecclesiology, because the Spirit is an eschatological gift,¹⁸³ constituting the Church as a *koinonia* of salvation for the final consummation of the world in the Kingdom of God.¹⁸⁴ A second issue is how various ordinances in the Church relate to the Church as a community of the Holy Spirit, where the latter determines the former (the perspective of *substantive apostolicity*), not the other way round. In this view, *episcopal succession* is approached through the apostolicity of the whole Church. I will discuss these in that order.

The Church as a historic community, once instituted by Jesus Christ and conferred through succession, is challenged by the Church as an eschatological community. John Zizioulas notes that historically, when the early Church developed its necessary institutional means to safeguard its independence as an *ecclesia*, a people called out by Christ, it was at the cost of a certain dependence upon history.¹⁸⁵ The early church gathered as a eucharistic and eschatological community in communion with the resurrected and the ascended. When the Church countered the outer and inner threat of gnostic teachings with the development of a more clearly-formulated threefold ministry, the rule of faith, and the canon of scripture, it also meant that the Church became more tied to history than previously. Eventually its eschatological orientation diminished, and she relied less on the Holy Spirit and more on what had been entrusted her historically. Later, when the Church's pneumatic and sacramental nature was largely forgotten,¹⁸⁶ the Church's historical focus became a problem. The medieval church lost the sense of the integrated connection of *traditio*, *successio* and *communio*, which is the materialised form of *substantive apostolicity*, and the Church was increasingly

¹⁸³ Both in the OT and the NT the Spirit is seen as an eschatological gift. McDonnell, *The Other Hand of God*, p34ff; Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, p221ff.

¹⁸⁴ PCS §§17-18, 36; Kärkkäinen, *Toward a Pneumatological Theology*, p222ff; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:1ff, 527ff.

¹⁸⁵ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p172ff.

¹⁸⁶ Kasper's expression; see Kasper, *Leadership in the Church*, p127.

understood as a legal structure.¹⁸⁷ The changed concept of ordained ministry was part of the Church's more one-dimensional historic reliance; the *potestas* given to the priest in ordination had once been given by Christ to the apostles as a deposit, and transferred through ordination.¹⁸⁸ The early church understood itself as a eucharistic and eschatological community living in the Holy Spirit. If ecclesiology is understood both christologically and pneumatologically, both historically and eschatologically, both as apostolic and as catholic, this has importance for the notion of apostolic succession and for the recognition of ordained ministry in inter-ecclesial relations.

Episcopal succession in its 'pipeline' version was a result of the medieval fragmented ecclesiology and its objectification of order, which did not manage to see episcopal ministry in its christological, pneumatological, and ecclesiological context. This history has been comprehensively described in Chapter 9 as the sacramental ecclesiology of the early church being mainly forgotten in the early medieval period, and resulting in a fragmented and possessive ecclesiology. The early church understood apostolicity as a characteristic of the life of the whole Church and as concretely expressed in *communio*, *traditio* and *successio* (community, teaching and order).¹⁸⁹ It was only later, when the ecclesiology and conception of ordained ministry had changed to a more hierarchical and juridical mode, that apostolicity and succession could be identified more exclusively with *successio manum* or with *successio doctrinae*, in either case with little relation to the catholicity of the Church. As part of this process the sacraments became objectified, defined as being seven in number, and defined in categories such as juridically valid or non-valid. This objectification, which is the inner reality of the fragmented ecclesiology, concerns not only the sacraments and the ordained ministry, but also doctrine understood and emphasised as *successio doctrinae*. *Successio apostolica* – seen either as *successio manum* or as *successio doctrinae* – is thus based on the same conception of 'Church' as juridically validated through certain ordinances, the one or the other as essential fundamentals, objectified in isolation from its ecclesiological context.¹⁹⁰ In contrast, in the early church those formed an integral and organic part of the local sacramental and pneumatological community. This was not only the case for the sacraments and the ordained ministry, but also for the faith and its doctrinal formulations. As Zizioulas has noted:

The 'symbols' or 'confessions' of faith were not in the early Church autonomous statements, as they are today in dogmatic manuals, but integral parts of

¹⁸⁷ Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p169.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., I:p191f; Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p135ff; Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p126ff.

¹⁸⁹ E.g. McSorley, 'Recognition of a Presbyteral Succession?', p23; Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p29ff.

¹⁹⁰ Kilmartin, 'Apostolic Office', p256ff; Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p131f.

the life and especially the worship of the community; they started as baptismal creeds and were adopted and used again as confessions for baptismal and eucharistic use. The great methodological error in the classical theories of 'validity' is that they tend to go to the unity of the community via these criteria, as if the latter could be conceived before and regardless of the community itself.¹⁹¹

As a consequence of the loss of a sacramental and pneumatological ecclesiology and the increased objectification of the ordinances of the Church, the integrating relation between Church, ministry, and sacraments fell apart. Puglisi has described this as at the Reformation:

Neither side saw ordination as integrating the newly ordained into an organic, charismatic whole, because the structural role of the Spirit was forgotten, giving way to an almost exclusively Christological interpretation of ordination. Even though all the Churches that sprang from the Reformation were opposed to the practice of ordaining ministers without a concrete charge, they still continued to think of the ordained ministry in a unilateral fashion.¹⁹²

The increased objectification of the Church's ordinances and the ecclesiological disintegration in the second millennium were outcomes of the Church's increased dependency on history and on a more one-sided christological ecclesiology. As a consequence, theology become more focused on the objective and unchangeable features of the Church, and the Church was seen as a legal structure identified with the hierarchy. Since ordained ministry was individualised and primarily seen as the possession of certain powers, the sense of ordination as a communal, liturgical, and juridical process (*election, epiclesis, and mission*) was lost.¹⁹³ In consequence, *ritual validation* became the method of evaluating the validity or authenticity of ordained ministry and, subsequently, of the church it represented.

*In contrast to the two problems here described – the increased dependence on history and, in consequence, the objectification of ordinances in a fragmented ecclesiology – the ecclesiological approach of the PCS, and of the ecumenical movement in general, can be understood as a restoration of the ecclesiology of the early church.*¹⁹⁴ This should not be perceived as an expression of romanticism: the ecclesiology of the early church was a deeper and more holistic expression of the Church. Through such an ecclesiology, as described in the PCS, the problems of a fragmented ecclesiology and the division caused by the interim situation of the Reformation could be overcome. That ecclesiology is, as described, fiducial and holistic and, in contrast to pre-Vatican II ecclesiology, non-exclusivist to its character.

¹⁹¹ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p243.

¹⁹² Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1998, II:p196.

¹⁹³ Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p207; Chapter 9.4.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p279; Chapter 15.2.

At the beginning of Chapter 14 I described how an elaborated ecclesiology of Vatican II and of the 20th century opened up the issue from an *all-or-nothing* to a *more-or-less* conception of the churches. This is a change that implies the move from an *exclusivist* to a *non-exclusivist* ecclesiology and the recognition of the ecclesial reality in denominations other than their own. That is, again, another way to describe the consequences of a more elaborated pneumatological ecclesiology. In the ecumenical dialogues, the churches realised that, despite their differences, there is a shared experience of being Church and of what it means to be engaged in the Church's mission and expressing the apostolic faith of the Church. This shared experience has led the participants in the ecumenical dialogue groups to recognise those ordained to lead that mission in their own communities as authentic ministers acting in the Holy Spirit and on behalf of those communities.¹⁹⁵ The mutual recognition that the salvific reality of the Spirit and, through the Spirit, of Christ, is present in other churches – since no church can claim the Spirit as its own – also means, at least implicitly, the recognition of the reality of ordained ministry, because there is no authentic Church without an authentic, or at least partially-authentic, ordained ministry.¹⁹⁶ This does not mean that the issue of validity is solved through such recognition of ordained ministry in the context of its own community; but it does mean an initial recognition through a recognition of the authenticity of the particular church and its participation in the *missio Dei*. In the so-called Accra Statement, *The Ordained Ministry in Ecumenical Perspective* (1975), *Faith & Order* described four basic steps in the process towards mutual recognition:

- (a) mutual respect of the ministers as persons endowed with certain (perhaps spiritual) authority, (b) mutual cooperation and acknowledgement that the other church has (partial) ecclesial nature, (c) official acknowledgement that the ministry of the other church is the apostolic ministry given by Christ, and (d) the mutual recognition of communities and their ministries.¹⁹⁷

The four stages are important for the issue of ecclesiological validation, because, according to a pneumatological ecclesiology, it is the ecclesial reality that contextualises the recognition of ministries, not the 'validity' of orders that determines the recognition of churches.¹⁹⁸ The pneumatological ecclesiology is elaborated in the PCS as an eschatological *koinonia* of salvation.¹⁹⁹ Both *communio/koinonia* and eschatology are the content and the character-

¹⁹⁵ Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p400; Henn, 'Concluding Reflections to the Symposium', p191.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. the discussion of *defectus ordinis* in Chapters 13.5 and 14.1.

¹⁹⁷ Faith & Order, Accra (1975), §§93-100, summarised by Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p404.

¹⁹⁸ Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p379; Kasper, 'Zur Frage der Anerkennung der Ämter', p97ff; Kilmartin, 'Apostolic Office', p243ff; Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p246; McDonnell, 'Ways of Validating Ministry', p257f.

¹⁹⁹ Chapter II in the PCS, "The nature and unity of the church", §§14-28

istic of a pneumatological ecclesiology, given through the activity of the Spirit.²⁰⁰ The pneumatological perspective is important for the understanding of apostolic succession, because the Church as a charismatic community lives through the Spirit, of which ordination is one expression.²⁰¹

It follows from a pneumatological ecclesiology that ordination is a charismatic event. As such, it must be understood to take place in an eschatological context, and it is not possible to insist on ordination as a merely historical transmission of apostolicity. In pneumatological and eschatological perspective, it is not the institution as such that constitutes continuity with the apostles, but the eschatological activity of the Holy Spirit in the whole communion of the Church. Accordingly, it is not the ministry that creates the Church, nor is it the Church that creates the ministry; rather, the ministry is created with and in the community by the Holy Spirit.²⁰²

In this charismatic perspective of ordination, which takes place in the historical and eschatological community of the Church and with the participating bishops as means for and witnesses to the Spirit,²⁰³ “the *res* – the Spirit who guarantees the true *traditio* – can be present even where the *sign* (whether *successio* or *communio*) is for some reason absent or not fully existent”.²⁰⁴ Applied concretely in the previous situation in the Porvoo churches, which the PCS intended to solve, the irregular ordination of Bugenhagen in 1528 (and later the Danish ordinations of 1537), conducted on the precedent of the early church and with the intention to ordain bishops, could also be regarded as valid, despite the material lack of *successio manum*.²⁰⁵ That recognition is based on the knowledge that the apostolicity of the Church is not maintained solely by episcopal manual succession, but also by the whole life of the Church gathered around her bishop (*successio sedis*) and that, although those ordinations were irregular due to extra-ordinary circumstances, the *intentio* was regular in the context of the charismatic life of the (regional) church. However, following from the understanding of apostolicity in its substantive sense, such recognition is not without conditions.

In order not to lose the materiality of the life of the Church, it is crucial that the issue of ecclesiological validation be not understood as if “anything goes”. That is not what the Porvoo solution does. Rather, ecclesiological validation requires the recognition of the Church in its whole reality as a given *communio* – christological and pneumatological, historical and eschatological, apostolic and catholic – sent into the world.²⁰⁶ An exceptional case,

²⁰⁰ Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p369.

²⁰¹ PCS §§19, 20, 46-48.

²⁰² Strong, *The Economy of the Spirit*, p370.

²⁰³ Cf. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p193; PCS §32i-j.

²⁰⁴ Kasper, *Leadership in the Church*, p126; See also Tjørhom, ‘The Church and Its Apostolicity’, p200; Nguyen, *The Apostolicity of the Church and Apostolic Succession*, p131f.

²⁰⁵ Cf., for example, the quotation of Root in Chapter 6.1; Root, ‘Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Their Broader Ecumenical Significance’, p23f.

²⁰⁶ PCS §§17-20.

such as the emergency ordinations in parts of the Evangelic Reformation, should not be made the norm, but has to be seen, as in the PCS, in the context of the whole ecclesiology and its interplay of *successio* in relation to *traditio* and *communio*. It is the mutual recognition of the ecclesiology described in the PCS that is the necessary precondition for the Porvoo solution and for the Porvoo churches' mutual recognition of each other's authenticity as apostolic churches.²⁰⁷ That is why the PD is based on the entire PCS: because it is not possible to receive ecclesial recognition and simultaneously deny the consensus ecclesiology of the PCS. Also crucial to the issue of ecclesiological validation is the integration of the *communal*, *liturgical*, and *juridical* aspects of ordination (as *election*, *epiclesis*, and *mission*) in an ecclesiological and charismatic whole as *communio*, *successio* and *traditio* (*substantive apostolicity*). Otherwise *ecclesiological validation* is only used as an alternative way to claim validity. In practice, however, it is still based on the same fragmented ecclesiology that lies behind a one-sided focus on *ritual validation*. As been described, that was the problem (although without the claim to charismatic or ecclesiological validation) with some of the interpretations of the Porvoo solution by some of the Porvoo churches.²⁰⁸ Such an interpretation reduces the ecclesiological reality and removes the precondition for the Porvoo solution.

The issue of ecclesiological validation is important, not only for those defending the meaning and the normative nature of episcopal succession, but also for those opposing it. This is because they also need to explain the meaning of ordination and how the ordained minister is established through the act of ordination. The Protestant position has commonly denied the meaning of episcopal succession, but without much reflection on the content of ordination and ordained ministry. Ecclesiological validation might fulfil that need. Not only the objectification of episcopal succession, but also that of doctrine, is overcome through a pneumatological ecclesiology.

So far I have only superficially described the fiducial and holistic ecclesiology behind the Porvoo solution, without undertaking a comprehensive treatment of *substantive apostolicity*, which is the basis for ecclesiological validation. This makes it necessary to discuss further the relation between doctrine and succession in the life of the Church – i.e., *traditio* and *successio* in *communal* perspective, which is the materialised form of *substantive apostolicity*, and in relation to history and eschatology. That is the purpose of the next chapter.

²⁰⁷ PCS §§56, 58. Cf. Tillard, *Church of Churches*, p189. "As soon as a Church, discovering its own faith and an identical ministry to its own in another community, can 'recognize' in this other community an authentic Church, in the very depths of its being, both of them are in *communio*. They are so objectively, even if they are not so visibly in their reciprocal relationship."

²⁰⁸ Chapter 13.5.

15. Substantive Apostolicity

In this chapter I shall draw together the various themes that have been treated in Part III into a reasoned conclusion. The content of the earlier chapters will be deepened, and apostolicity elaborated as *substantive apostolicity*, in the perspective of pneumatology, history, and eschatology, with implications for ecclesiological validation and for the unity of the Church.

In this thesis I have shown that the Church is understood in the PCS as a people who are a *communio* in trinitarian, missiological, sacramental, and eschatological perspectives.²⁰⁹ These four dimensions are held together, and characterise the Church as a communal people who are one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. As noted,²¹⁰ it has been established in the ecumenical dialogues that a new awareness of the Church's historicity and eschatological nature has changed how apostolic succession is understood. From an isolated focus on episcopal succession, 'apostolicity' has been broadened and identified as a characteristic of the Church as a whole. As an expression of apostolicity, episcopal succession is emphasised as concerning not only the issue of a validly transferred ordained ministry and sacramental acts in relation to this ministry, but also the issue of the unity of the Church. This means that the issue of episcopal succession concerns not only apostolicity, but also catholicity.²¹¹ I have described how the Church as a *communio* – instituted, called and sent by God – needs to be understood in both its vertical and its horizontal dimensions.²¹² At the Reformation the provinces of the one western catholic church were separated and evolved into autonomous national churches representing four different traditions – although it is far too simplistic to distinguish the traditions completely from each other. The vertical relation of those churches with God was retained, but the horizontal communion with the other church provinces was lost. All of those different aspects of the Church – christology, pneumatology, history, eschatology, vertical and horizontal *communio*, apostolicity, and catholicity – are related to and find expression in the eucharistic celebration of the Church. This dynamic of the Church is what this chapter is about, which at the same time is the content of that 'deeper understanding' set out in the foreword of the

²⁰⁹ Chapter 2.5.5.

²¹⁰ Chapter 2.3.

²¹¹ PCS §§43, 48, referring to ALIC, 'Niagara', p109f, §91, referring to the Council of Nicea.

²¹² Chapter 9.4.

PCS.²¹³ This deeper understanding is, as noted many times in this thesis, the precondition for the method in the PCS, indicating that this deeper ecclesiology embraces and integrates earlier polarised and objectified notions of *successio doctrinae* and *successio ministerii*, and establishes *unity through a deeper sense of apostolicity*.

I have referred to *the deeper understanding of apostolicity* in the PCS as *substantive apostolicity*. Although this term is not used in the PCS, it corresponds to how the PCS understands apostolicity and how it is materialised in the *successio*, *traditio* and *communio* of the Church. In other words, to elaborate *substantive apostolicity*, it is important to investigate the dynamic of those three. To clarify these concepts in relation to the PCS, it is important to investigate further the suggestions discerned in Part II about possible developments of the statement. Those concerned the eschatological meaning of episcopacy, as suggested by Puglisi; how catholicity is perceived and thought to be concretely expressed in the PCS, as emphasised not least by Roelvink;²¹⁴ and, as described by Arnold,²¹⁵ catholicity as an integral aspect of the PCS.²¹⁶ The question is whether those calls to deepen the PCS are possible. If that is the case, it might also make the content of the Porvoo solution clearer. If such a development of the PCS is possible, it must further be clarified whether such improvements are implicit in the PCS or whether something new would have been added to the statement. Such clarification is important for the Porvoo Communion, because if those improvements are implicit in the ecclesiology of the PCS, it establishes a normative content for the church provinces of the communion; but if they do not follow from the ecclesiology of the PCS, neither are they normative.

First, in this chapter I will investigate the eschatological meaning of episcopacy in the PCS. That section will further describe how pneumatology, history, eschatology, and episcopacy are integrated in the ecclesiology of the PCS. Secondly, I shall focus why *substantive apostolicity*, as a description of how apostolicity was perceived in the early church, is relevant for the PCS; thirdly, I shall elaborate how *substantive apostolicity* is materialised in the Church's *successio*, *traditio* and *communio* and establishes the Church as catholic and apostolic, and in what way it is crucial for the visible, corporate, and structured unity of the Church.

²¹³ PCS Foreword, §9.

²¹⁴ See Chapter 6.4.4.

²¹⁵ See quote by John Arnold in Chapter 1.3.

²¹⁶ PCS §§43, 48.

15.1. Episcopacy in the perspective of pneumatology and eschatology

As a consequence of the trinitarian ecclesiological perspective, pneumatology is crucial in the PCS,²¹⁷ especially in Chapter Two, *God's Kingdom and the Mystery and Purpose of the Church*. The Christian life is described as a life in the Spirit that has brought us from death to new life and sets us free (§15). §17 states that “into his life of communion with God and with one another (*koinonia*), we are summoned by the gospel. In baptism the Holy Spirit unites us with Christ in his death and resurrection”, followed by a description of the sacramental life of the Church, served by an ordained ministry. According to the PCS, the Church appears in the world as a *communio* materialised through bonds of communion.²¹⁸ This is another way of describing the Church as a communion that is structured through the activity of the Holy Spirit (cf. PCS §§19, 20 and 1 Cor 12). According to the PCS:

The Holy Spirit bestows on the community diverse and complementary gifts. These are for the common good of the whole people and are manifested in acts of service within the community and to the world. All members are called to discover, with the help of the community, the gifts they have received and to use them for the building up of the Church and for the service of the world to which the Church is sent.²¹⁹

As an expression of this bestowal of diverse and complementary gifts, the Holy Spirit calls and sets apart persons for lifelong service in the ordained ministry,²²⁰ and “at the laying on of hands by the ordaining bishop and other representatives with prayer, the whole Church calls upon God in confidence of his promise to pour out the Holy Spirit on his covenant people (Is. 11: 1-3, cf. *Veni Creator Spiritus*)”.²²¹ The persons ordained for the apostolic ministry serve the Church and function as a bond of communion as leaders (*episcopes*) – personally, collegially, and communally²²² – and are “sent by God to gather and nourish the people of God in each place, uniting and linking them with the Church universal within the whole communion of saints”.²²³ The PCS describes the uniting function of the episcopal ministry as “the personal, collegial and communal dimensions of oversight find expression at the local, regional and universal levels of the Church's life”.²²⁴ Accordingly the *bonds of communion* are understood as essential for the Church as a communion:

²¹⁷ *Spirit* is used 23 times in the PCS, including *Holy Spirit*, which is used 16 times.

²¹⁸ PCS §§7, 20, 24.

²¹⁹ PCS §19; see also §38.

²²⁰ PCS §§24, 41, 47, 48.

²²¹ PCS §47.

²²² PCS §§32k, 45, 58.

²²³ PCS §20.

²²⁴ PCS §45.

The maintenance of unity and the sustaining of diversity are served by bonds of communion. Communion with God and with fellow believers is manifested in one baptism in response to the apostolic preaching; in the common confession of the apostolic faith; in the united celebration of the eucharist which builds up the one body of Christ; and in a single ministry set apart by prayer and the laying on of hands. This unity is also manifested as a communion in love, implying that Christians are bound to one another in a committed relationship with mutual responsibilities, common spiritual goods and the obligation to share temporal resources. Already in the Acts of the Apostles we can discern these bonds: ‘Those who received [Peter’s] word were baptized... And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers... And all who believed were together and had all things in common’ (Acts 2: 41ff).²²⁵

As a whole, the Church as a structured communal people, led by its ordained apostolic ministry (*episcopo*), is understood as a pneumatological and eucharistic people sent into the world as an eschatological sign and an effective instrument of the Kingdom of God, a *sacramentum mundi*. The meaning of the Church, according to the PCS, is to be a sign and instrument for “unity as the goal of all creation (Eph. 1) when the whole world will be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5). Communion is thus the fruit of redemption and necessarily an eschatological reality”.²²⁶ From a pneumatological perspective, the PCS elaborates the Church’s eschatological dimension:

The Church, as communion, must be seen as instrumental to God’s ultimate purpose. It exists for the glory of God to serve, in obedience to the mission of Christ, the reconciliation of humankind and of all creation (Eph. 1:10). Therefore the Church is sent into the world as a sign, instrument and foretaste of a reality which comes from beyond history – the Kingdom of God. The Church embodies the mystery of salvation, of a new humanity reconciled to God and to one another through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:14, Col. 1:19-27). Through its ministry of service and proclamation it points to the reality of the Kingdom; and in the power of the Holy Spirit it participates in the divine mission by which the Father sent the Son to be the saviour of the world (1 John 4:14, cf. John 3:17).²²⁷

Despite this eschatological understanding of the Church, it is on this point that Puglisi has criticised the PCS as not sufficiently worked out. The problem, according to Puglisi, is that the perspective becomes too historically one-sided in its treatment of episcopal succession. Puglisi’s critique relates to the different ecclesiologies of the first and second millennia, and to how the Church became more historically oriented at the cost of its sacramental, pneumatological, and eschatological character. I have described this as the difference between a possessive fragmented ecclesiology and a sacramental

²²⁵ PCS §24.

²²⁶ PCS §27.

²²⁷ PCS §18.

and fiducial ecclesiology. While the ecclesiology of the PCS is clearly formulated in accordance with the latter, it seems that on this point there is a lingering influence of the possessive fragmented ecclesiology, which shows itself in a too one-sided historical perspective on the longstanding problem to be solved about episcopal succession.²²⁸

While the PCS understands the Church as an eschatological reality, this is not worked through in its description of the episcopal ministry and its succession, even though the episcopal ministry is seen as an expression of the Church's apostolicity. This has the consequence, in the words of Puglisi, that:

[The] PCS has adopted a more historical, linear approach that conceives apostolicity as rooted in the understanding of 'apostle' as one who is sent as a missionary,²²⁹ rather than seeing the body of the Twelve as an eschatological reality that gathers the dispersed people of God. This latter position is to be seen in the meaning attributed to the substitution of Matthias for Judas – a substitution that bears witness to and establishes the apostolic succession. The principle it points to is not so much that of the *historical continuity* of witnesses succeeding the Twelve, but rather the *eschatological mission* of the Twelve, the unique and lasting event that assumes decisive importance for the history of salvation.²³⁰

I agree with Puglisi – although, without challenging the relevance of his critique, I would add that the missionary meaning of *apostle* is also a vital aspect of the eschatological content of the Twelve as symbolising the people of God sent into the world. The PCS's weak eschatology at this point, as identified by Puglisi, contrasts with BEM, which otherwise is so influential for the PCS. BEM elaborates the eschatological meaning of the ordained ministry:

[M§9] The church has never been without persons holding specific authority and responsibility. Jesus chose and sent the disciples to be witnesses to the Kingdom (Matt. 10:1-8). The Twelve were promised that they would 'sit on thrones judging the tribes of Israel' (Luke 22:30). A particular role is attributed to the Twelve within the communities of the first generation. They are witnesses of the Lord's life and resurrection (Acts 1:21-26). They lead the community in prayer, teaching, the breaking of bread, proclamation and service (Acts 2:42-47; 6:2-6, etc.) The very existence of the Twelve and other apostles shows that, from the beginning, there were differentiated roles in the community.

[M§10] Jesus called the Twelve to be representatives of the renewed Israel. At that moment they represent the whole people of God and at the same time exercise a special role in the midst of that community. ... The role of the

²²⁸ Cf. PCS §34.

²²⁹ Puglisi's note states: "See PCS: 'Apostolicity means that the Church is sent by Jesus...' in §37, citing in note the reference taken from the Niagara Report."

²³⁰ Puglisi, 'The Porvoo Common Statement', p227.

apostles as witnesses to the resurrection of Christ is unique and unrepeatable. There is therefore a difference between the apostles and the ordained ministers whose ministries are founded on theirs.

[M§11] As Christ chose and sent the apostles, Christ continues through the Holy Spirit to choose and call persons into the ordained ministry. As heralds and ambassadors, ordained ministers are representatives of Jesus Christ to the community, and proclaim his message of reconciliation. As leaders and teachers they call the community to submit to the authority of Jesus Christ, the teacher and prophet, in whom law and prophets were fulfilled. As pastors, under Jesus Christ the chief shepherd, they assemble and guide the dispersed people of God, in anticipation of the coming Kingdom.

The eschatological dimension means that, in biblical perspective, the Twelve mark the inauguration of the promise that all of Israel will be reunited in the *eschaton*. It is important to note that the position given to the apostles and, in succession to them, to episcopal ministers (as the threefold ministry took shape in the early church)²³¹ as leaders and teachers in the Church, is associated with witnessing to Jesus and the Kingdom. Apostolicity and succession are thus linked with witnessing to the faith, later formalised in the *regula fidei*, the canon of scripture, and the doctrine of the Church. The witnessing – or, in the words of Puglisi, the eschatological mission – of the Twelve, is, however, not only a function. Through the Spirit, the apostles, and after them the episcopal ministers, are themselves part of the eschatological reality to which they bear witness.²³²

Puglisi emphasised that the PCS could easily have established the relation between the eschatological meaning of the Church and of the apostolic ordained ministry,²³³ if the Kingdom were seen as being realised in an anticipatory way in *the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles* that are listed in PCS §36:

‘The Spirit keeps the Church in the apostolic tradition until the fulfilment of history in the Kingdom of God. Apostolic tradition in the Church means continuity in the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles: witness to the apostolic faith, proclamation and fresh interpretation of the Gospel, celebration of baptism and the eucharist, the transmission of ministerial responsibilities, communion in prayer, love, joy and suffering, service to the sick and needy, unity among the local churches and sharing the gifts which the Lord has given to each.’ [The whole of §36 is a quote from BEM M§34.]

If this relation had been more clearly established, the problem of episcopal succession could, according to Puglisi, have been focused less on succession as historical transference and, as in the early Church, focused more on the Church as a eucharistic and eschatological community living in the Holy

²³¹ Cf. Chapter 13.4; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p379f.

²³² Cf. PCS §§14-20.

²³³ Puglisi, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p227.

Spirit. While the relation is not clearly established, it is not opposed to the understanding of the PCS. Rather, a more developed view contributes to integrating ordained ministry and the ecclesiology of the PCS and to making it more consistent. The two components – the Church as an anticipatory foretaste of the Kingdom of God, and the permanent characteristics of the Church – are both clearly expressed in the PCS. Although the relation is not clearly established, the pneumatological and eschatological ecclesiology of the PCS is a prerequisite for the Porvoo solution. The PCS understands the Church to be an instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom.²³⁴ At the same time the apostolic Church, which in an anticipatory way reveals the eschatological Kingdom, is permanently characterised by, among other things, the apostolic ordained ministry in succession.²³⁵ The PCS establishes a relationship between the Church as a pneumatological and eschatological reality in the world, and episcopal succession as an expression of this apostolic and eschatological reality.²³⁶ Still, a more clearly-established understanding of the eschatological meaning of apostolicity and episcopacy could have helped to make the Porvoo solution more accessible to those who were receiving it. Why is this the case?

As has been described, the third phase of the ecumenical method may be described as *pneumatological*. The understanding of the Church as both a communal people and an eschatological people is a consequence of a more pneumatologically elaborated ecclesiology. This is important for the issue of the apostolicity of the Church. As described in Chapter 14.3.3, the Church's apostolicity is not only a historical notion – i.e., that the Church's historic deposit is transferred from one generation to the next – but also an eschatological notion. Apostolicity and succession are about the *history*, the *present*, and the *future* of the Church, and Christ meets the Church in all three. The difference between the historical and the eschatological dimensions of apostolicity is overcome through the sacramental and pneumatic dimension of the eucharist.²³⁷ The proper balance between the historical and the eschatological perspectives is maintained through two types of pneumatology: the *anamnetic historical* approach, and the *epicletic eschatological* approach. In the medieval period this pneumatological and sacramental dimension was lost, and apostolic succession became a question of the power of valid office transferred through right ordination.²³⁸ In contrast, ordination in pneumatological and eschatological perspective becomes not so much a transference from ordainer to ordinand as a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit through ordination as a charismatic event and response to the Church's prayer.²³⁹

²³⁴ PCS §18.

²³⁵ PCS §36.

²³⁶ PCS §41.

²³⁷ Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p172ff; Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p19.

²³⁸ Puglisi, *The Process of Admission*, 1996, I:p191f; Kasper, *Leadership in the Church*, p127.

²³⁹ Bradshaw, *Rites of Ordination*, p63.

Ordination in this perspective should not be understood in isolation, but, as in the early church, *successio* is related to both *traditio* and *communio*. It is in this holistic and fiducial ecclesiological perspective that it is possible to understand historical irregularities in a constructive and unifying manner.

In dealing with the problem of an occasional break in manual episcopal succession, the PCS emphasises the importance of pneumatology for ecclesiology and ordination, the importance of the *intentio* to ordain episcopal ministers, and the importance of *successio sedis*. In its stress on *successio sedis*, the PCS highlights the importance of the continuity of the eucharistic community.²⁴⁰ That is another way of describing the Church as a community in which the bishop resides; and that, in turn, points to the importance of ecclesial recognition for the catholicity and the apostolicity of the Church.²⁴¹ This perspective is strengthened by further elaborating an eschatological understanding of episcopal ministry as part of the permanent characteristics of the apostolic Church and of the anticipated realisation of the Kingdom of God.

The eschatological meaning of apostolic succession challenges the notion of apostolic succession as a merely historical transfer of individually-possessed power and authority. Instead, apostolic continuity is understood as belonging to the whole Church, and episcopal succession is seen as an instrument of this continuity that is both communal and eschatological. This means that the permanent characteristic is not only historically derived, but also comes from the future and from above through the work of the Holy Spirit in the eucharistic and eschatological life of the Church. Through this double meaning of apostolicity – as both historical and eschatological – the Church relates to Jesus not only in fidelity to its apostolic beginnings, but also in anticipation of the future fulfilment. Unity with the Church of the apostles does not only mean preserving the situation and thinking of the early church: it also means that the Church is only authentically apostolic when it as a missionary Church, and as a *sacramentum mundi* remains ready to be renewed on the basis of its origin – not to adjust to the present time, but to be able to witness to the liberating and eschatological truth of Jesus Christ.²⁴² In the word of Irenaeus, “the Spirit keeps the apostolic heritage always young and fresh”²⁴³ which is another way of describing a fiducial ecclesiology. The PCS describes this fiducial character of the Church thus: “the Spirit keeps the Church in the apostolic tradition until the fulfilment of history in the Kingdom of God”,²⁴⁴ and its tradition and succession as a many-sided reality.²⁴⁵ I have described this reality by the term *substantive apostolicity*, mate-

²⁴⁰ Cf. Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church*, p124f.

²⁴¹ Cf. PCS §§41, 46-48.

²⁴² Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p407.

²⁴³ Irenaeus, *Against the Heresies. Book 3*, III, 24.1., p110.

²⁴⁴ PCS §36, with a quote from BEM M§34.

²⁴⁵ Cf. Quanbeck, ‘A Contemporary View on Apostolic Succession’, p187.

rialised in the Church's *communio*, *traditio* and *successio*. Since this is the ecclesiological understanding of the early church, I will first discuss the notions of apostolicity and apostolic succession in the early church and how they relate to the PCS, before I turn to the issue of *substantive apostolicity*, understood as the interplay of *successio*, *traditio* and *communio* in expressing the ecclesiology of the PCS and making real the confession of the Church as catholic and apostolic.

15.2. Apostolicity and apostolic succession

The reason for using the *substantive apostolicity* of the early church as a model is not simply that it was the approach of the early church, but that the early church's conception of apostolic succession is a deeper, more dynamic and ecclesologically more holistic concept than the traditional Anglican and Lutheran elaborations of this concept.²⁴⁶ In contrast with the traditional Lutheran understanding of apostolicity as an issue of true doctrine, or with the Anglican view of it as a question of episcopal succession, the early church understood apostolicity as a dynamic interplay of *communio*, *traditio*, and *successio*. The Lutheran Reformation continued to emphasise *credo*, and also *communio* at the local level; but historical developments meant that those two elements came to be understood as opposed to ministerial *successio*.²⁴⁷

The prerequisite for the Porvoo solution, as has been described in this thesis, was to contextualise the two ecclesial traditions historically. That, as described in Chapter 2, was done as part of a broader ecumenical movement that, through extended exegetical, patristic, historical, and sociological knowledge, was able to contextualise, relativise, and overcome the churches' previously divisive issues. This historical perspective was mostly lacking in the Porvoo debate, which is surprising, given that the trinitarian *koinonia* ecclesiology in the PCS is primarily motivated by biblical sources and references to ecumenical documents.²⁴⁸ This lack is an expression of the cognitive gap, described in the introduction to Part III, between the content of the PCS and the doctrinal identity of its interpreters. While the references in the PCS are primarily to Scripture and ecumenical documents, there seems to be no specific reference to patristic sources. The PCS does, however, relate in several different ways to the early church. The statement declares in §7:

The faith, worship and spirituality of all our churches are rooted in the tradition of the apostolic Church. We stand in continuity with the Church of the patristic and medieval periods both directly and through the insights of the Reformation period. We each understand our own church to be part of the

²⁴⁶ Cf. Rubensson, 'De ortodoxa kyrkorna', p62ff; Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p20.

²⁴⁷ Cf. Henn, 'Concluding Reflections to the Symposium'.

²⁴⁸ See PCS, chapter II, *The Nature and the Unity of the Church*, §§14-28.

One, Holy, Catholic Church of Jesus Christ and truly participating in the one apostolic mission of the whole people of God.

And in §41:

The threefold ministry of bishops, priests and deacons became the general pattern of ordained ministry in the early Church, though subsequently it underwent considerable change in its practical exercise and is still developing today.²⁴⁹

And in §25:

In the narrative of the Acts of the Apostles this sharing in a common life is served by the apostolic ministry. We are given a picture of how this ministry fosters the richness of diversity while also maintaining unity. Through the mission of the apostles Peter and Paul, the Gentiles also are baptized. In the face of the threat of division, this radical decision is ratified by the coming together of the Church in council (Acts 15). Here is illustrated the role of apostolic leaders and their place within councils of the Church.

The most important link of the PCS with the perspective of the NT and the patristic period is the trinitarian ecclesiological notion of the Church as a Spirit-given *communio*,²⁵⁰ in dynamic interplay with *successio* and *traditio*. The question is why *apostolicity* and *succession* became such important concepts in the early church and how they relate to *successio*, *traditio*, and *communio* as the materialised form of *substantive apostolicity*.

In the early church the concepts of ‘apostolicity’ and ‘apostolic succession’ emerged out of a need. Linguistically *apostolicity* means, literally, ‘of the apostles’, ‘relating to the apostles’, ‘of the apostles’ time’, etc. Despite this obvious meaning, apostolicity does not essentially mean ‘originating with the apostles’, but *originating with Jesus and what he entrusted to his chosen apostles* (cf. 1 John 1:1). The theological meaning of *apostolicity*, as well as of *succession*, is thus to safeguard the salvific reality of Jesus in order to ensure its presence in the continuing life of the Church – i.e., *the permanent characteristics of the Church*.²⁵¹ In the early church *apostolic* came to concern both the doctrine and the organisation of the Church.²⁵² The term *apostolic succession* (*diadochē*, *successio*) is not used in the NT, but as a concept it was developed in the post-apostolic period, and through history it has been interpreted in different ways. This does not mean that the content, which later would be referred to as ‘apostolic succession’, is not already

²⁴⁹ PCS §41, cf. PCS §31j.

²⁵⁰ Cf. Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, particular chapter 1, but also the entire book; Holze, *The Church as Communion*.

²⁵¹ PCS §36.

²⁵² Kelly, ‘“Catholic and Apostolic” in the Early Centuries’, p281ff; Küng, *The Church*, p354ff.

present in the period and writings of the NT. Jesus himself chose the twelve as emissaries/apostles of the Kingdom of God and as symbols of the eschatological restoration of the twelve tribes of the people of God (cf. Mt 19:28, Lk 22:30, Mt 28:20).²⁵³ Matthias was chosen to replace Judas, the apostle Peter led the community in Jerusalem, and later Paul became the apostle to the gentiles. The departure point of the apostolic office is the resurrection (Gal 1:1, 12, 16, 1 Cor 9:1; 15:9f). On the one hand, the calling by and relationship with Jesus means that the apostolic office is unique; on the other hand it means that the apostolic office is part of the revelation and proclamation of Jesus, which signifies both apostolicity of origin and apostolicity of the *eschaton*.²⁵⁴ In a similar way, his preaching was accompanied by signs and miracles. In this way the apostolic witness – both as the apostolic preaching (*successio doctrinae*) and as the apostolic ministry (*successio ministerii*) – is the continuing basis and norm for the ‘permanent characteristics’ of the later Church.²⁵⁵

In the NT we find the idea that doctrine is transmitted and preserved faithfully by virtue of a continuity of witnesses (2 Tim 2:2, Phil 1:1, Mt 28:20).²⁵⁶ By their mere existence, the NT writings witness to a transmission of the Gospel and of the faith from the apostles through the evangelists and the authors of the epistles. In the later writings of the NT, when the apostles had died, the connection to an apostle was regarded with great reverence, since it assured a connection with the Lord himself.²⁵⁷

In the NT there is already continuity and a transmission of office from the apostolic to the post-apostolic period. Alongside the original apostles and the apostle Paul, there were charismatic, itinerant preachers and community messengers to whom the NT refers as ‘apostles’. They were not an outgrowth or organic part of the original twelve; rather, they were motivated by the Spirit and had charisms acknowledged by the community and by Paul (1 Cor 1-3, Acts 13:1f.).²⁵⁸ Even though the monarchical episcopal office had not yet developed, the NT writings are aware of a continuity in the apostolic ministry. Acts 20:28 describes Paul’s speech in Miletus to the presbyters and *episcopoi* whom the Holy Spirit had appointed as shepherds over the flock after Paul himself had departed; and they were responsible for carrying out the tasks that the apostle had previously done. The same continuity is seen in the Pastoral letters, where Timothy and Titus, followers of the apostle Paul, are described as installed as office bearers through prayer and the laying on

²⁵³ Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p125; Quinn, ‘Ministry in the New Testament’, p99; Nguyen, *The Apostolicity of the Church and Apostolic Succession*, p62f.

²⁵⁴ See quotation above in Chapter 15.1 from BEM M§§9-11.

²⁵⁵ PCS §36, 41; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p379f.

²⁵⁶ Cf. Brown, *The Churches the Apostles Left Behind*, p14ff; Farkasfalvy, ‘The Early Development of the New Testament Canon’, p151.

²⁵⁷ Cf. Brown, ‘Episcopos and Episcopè’, p330ff.

²⁵⁸ Kasper, ‘Apostolic Succession in the Office of Bishop’, p204.

of hands (1 Tm 4:14; 2 Tm 1:6; Ti 1:5). Already at this point in the Christian history, a transmission of office is given by the Holy Spirit through the apostles,²⁵⁹ and from Timothy and Titus to the office bearer they appointed. This means that those offices described in the NT's writings are not understood as purely human institutions, but also as established by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28) and given to the Church as gifts (Eph 4:10-20). As later in the early church the main focus was not on the transmission from ordainer to ordinand, but on the activity of the Spirit and the authority bestowed by the exalted Lord; fundamentally, ordained ministry has a christological and pneumatological foundation.²⁶⁰

That the concept of apostolicity and apostolic succession was not developed until later is fairly obvious, given that it was not until the apostles were no longer around, combined with the insight that the coming of Jesus was not going to happen immediately, that there was a need for a developed reflection on apostolicity and succession. The same is true for doctrine and the development of the NT canon. The issues in focus were the *continuity* of "the normative apostolic witness" (1 John 1:1),²⁶¹ and the *identity* of the Church.²⁶² Both relate to the question of the Church's unity in time and space. The need became urgent when the Church was challenged and threatened by schism, and authoritative teaching and discernment were required. In this struggle, competing teaching traditions followed various teachers who laid claim to the authentic teaching of Jesus.²⁶³

As with the Church's doctrinal understanding in general, the organisation and understanding of apostolicity and succession could only develop over time, in response to a concrete problem – a challenging or questioning of the content of the Christian teaching. As political philosophy and sociology have demonstrated, institutionalisation is necessary for the survival of a community over time.²⁶⁴ In the face of such challenges, the early church had to develop its thinking and deepen its understanding of the Christian life received by and through the apostles, guided by the Holy Spirit, and in communion with the Risen One.

In order not to fall back into an objectified understanding of ordained ministry and scripture, it is important to see that this process of spiritual discernment took place in the pneumatological and eschatological life of the

²⁵⁹ Cf. PCS §41 and BEM M§10.

²⁶⁰ PCS §§32j, 47-48; Cf. Chapter 14.3.2; Kasper, 'Apostolic Succession in the Office of Bishop', p205; Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p222f; Bradshaw, *Rites of Ordination*, p63.

²⁶¹ PCS §37.

²⁶² Chapter 9.3.1; Roloff, 'Church Leadership According to the NT', p144.

²⁶³ Dunderberg, *Gnostic Morality Revisited*, p4ff; Berglund, 'Interpreting Readers'. It has been common to refer to this struggle of competing teachings as a struggle between the Church and the Gnostic movements. However, such a dichotomy probably assumes too much homogeneity on both sides: the situation was probably much more intermingled.

²⁶⁴ McCann, *Church and Organization*.

Church's eucharistic *communio*.²⁶⁵ Historically, *doctrine*, *order*, and *canon* developed in parallel and in an inter-related way from a greater plurality to a more defined content and, in the case of church order, the threefold pattern of ministry. Thus, from the second century onwards, the leadership of a particular local church by a particular bishop responsible for it, founded on the apostolic norm and in communion with the episcopal college, became increasingly universally accepted.²⁶⁶

Against the challenges of schism, the canon of scripture was discerned in order to protect the integrity of the Church's teaching, in parallel with and integrated into the development of the threefold ministry.²⁶⁷ By the end of the second century the broad outline of the canon had been settled, even though there were local variations. The criterion that ultimately prevailed was *apostolicity*, which in this case meant that, unless a book could be shown to have been written by an apostle, or at least to have the authority of an apostle behind it, it was rejected, however edifying or popular among the faithful it might be. Some of the books, like Hebrew, James and Revelation, had to wait for several centuries before they were universally recognised by the Church. As with the ordained ministry, so also the canonical writings were understood as a gift of the Holy Spirit, as inspired as the OT,²⁶⁸ and witnessed to in the epistles (2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:21).

The formation of the canon of scripture did not change the Church's apostolicity, however; as described earlier, it came to influence the Church's identity as it became dependent more on its history and less on pneumatology and eschatology. Eventually this affected and narrowed the notion of 'apostolic succession'. Scripture – first the Old Testament, and from the second century the emerging New Testament – was seen as a part of the Church's tradition. The apostolic heritage, the *traditio*, was passed on to the next generation in the communal life of the Church, with its episcopal leaders as successors of the eschatological college of the Twelve. The *traditio* thus stood in an integrated relation to *successio* and *communio*,²⁶⁹ in service of, and in order to maintain, the Church apostolic, catholic, one, and holy.

I will now turn to how those three notions of the early church's ecclesiological understanding – i.e., *successio*, *traditio*, and *communio* (*substantive apostolicity*) – are elaborated in the PCS in order to deepen the earlier ecclesiologies of the Porvoo churches, to overcome earlier disagreements, to su-

²⁶⁵ Zizioulas, *Eucharist, Bishop, Church*, p123.

²⁶⁶ Roloff, 'Church Leadership According to the NT', p147; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p379f.

²⁶⁷ Merkt, 'Das Problem der Apostolischen Sukzession', 289. „Betrachtet man die Geschichte des Konzeptes der Apostolischen Sukzession, dann fällt die Parallele zur Kanon-geschichte ins Auge. Das Konzept wird immer da zum Thema, wo es auch um den Kanon geht.“

²⁶⁸ Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*, p60f.

²⁶⁹ Congar, *Tradition and Traditions*, p24; Cf. Hastings, 'Apostolicity', p33; Kasper, 'Apostolic Succession in the Office of Bishop', p204ff.

persede piecemeal agreements, and so to reach a visible corporate unity that is structured with ‘bonds of communion’.²⁷⁰

15.3. *Successio, traditio, communio*

In John 17 Jesus himself prays for his Church and for her unity and holiness. Together unity and holiness witness to the inner reality of the Triune God and of his Church.²⁷¹ The close relationship between holiness and unity is mirrored in the creed’s description of the Church as ‘one’ and ‘holy’, made more explicit in the marks ‘catholic’ and ‘apostolic’. The creed is, however, not a full description of the Christian life, nor of the Church. It does not say anything about the sacramental celebration of baptism and the eucharist, nor does it say anything about ordained ministry. Rather, the creed’s characterisation of the Church presupposes a communal reality given through the creating and saving life and action of the Triune God, in which the creed was formulated and proclaimed. That communal reality is said to be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Traditionally it has been common to refer to them as ‘the four marks’; but they should rather be understood as four interrelated and eschatological dimensions of the Church. In a description of apostolicity, therefore, it is important to include the issue of catholicity, and to account for how both relate to the Church’s unity and holiness. Among the four dimensions, unity comes first; and that is no coincidence, because unity comes from the Church’s identity as a fellowship or ‘com-unity’ created by the Triune God, while the other three dimensions are implications of the Church’s unity as rooted in Jesus Christ.²⁷²

The PCS aims to restore the visible and corporate unity of the Church, and deals with the historical sources of division over the Church’s apostolicity and catholicity. However, the issue of holiness, and of the Church as a holy people, is not discussed much in the PCS, although the Church is emphasised as an instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom of God; and the establishing of the Porvoo Communion is seen as a way to fulfil better the common mission of the Porvoo churches in Europe today.²⁷³ The visible unity and continuity of the Church is accomplished in the PCS through a common faith (*traditio*), a common sacramental life (*communio*), and one united ordained ministry (*successio*), described as *bonds of communion*.²⁷⁴ The apostolic life of the Church, understood as a dynamic interplay of com-

²⁷⁰ PCS §§5, 16, 17, 21, 22, 24, 32*h*, 41, 58*b(iv)*.

²⁷¹ Cf. PCS §21.

²⁷² Schlink, *Der kommende Christus und die kirchlichen Traditionen*, p95.

²⁷³ The opportunities to work for peace, justice and human rights are emphasised in PCS §10, while issues of anthropology and ethics are not discussed. Cf. Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p129ff.

²⁷⁴ PCS §24ff.

munio, *traditio*, and *successio*, has been referred to as *substantive apostolicity*.²⁷⁵ It is this dynamic reality that the PCS describes as “apostolic continuity” and as “the permanent characteristics of the Church of the apostles”.²⁷⁶

The dynamic reality means that *communio* and *successio* cannot exist without *traditio*. *Traditio* is the true faith, which cannot be reduced to the written creed, the canon, or any written formulas of the Church, although these do communicate the *traditio*. Further, *substantive apostolicity* means that there is no *communio* without a common faith expressed through *traditio* and served by the one single ordained ministry in *successio*. In a way, this is an affirmation of the traditional Lutheran stress on *doctrine*. It is stated in *The Ministry in the Church* (1981):

The Lutheran conviction is that acceptance of communion with the episcopal office in the historic succession is meaningful not as an isolated act, but only as it contributes to the unity of the church in faith and witnesses to the universality of the gospel of reconciliation.²⁷⁷

The words “isolated act” shall be seen as a distancing from any objectified notion of episcopal (pipeline) succession. However, as described earlier, the problem with an objectified and juridical understanding concerns not only episcopal succession, but also doctrine and the so-called *successio doctrinae*.

In the perspective of a holistic and fiducial ecclesiology, the concept of *successio doctrinae* is problematic, because the doctrine of the Church is the formalised content of what is handed on – i.e., the faith – and that happens through the living *traditio* of the whole Church,²⁷⁸ of which the episcopal ministry in succession and the Church’s doctrine are expressions and instruments. This means that the Church’s *traditio* should not be reduced to an objectified notion such as *successio doctrinae*, but should rather be understood as the faith given through the “normative apostolic witness”.²⁷⁹ The inner reality and meaning of this faith is the Holy Spirit, who gives communion with Jesus Christ and the Father.²⁸⁰

While it can be agreed, with the Lutheran conviction, that continuity or apostolic succession at its core is about the faith of the Church,²⁸¹ this does not mean that visible communion and episcopal succession are reduced to *adiaphora*.²⁸² Rather, both *communio* and *successio* are expressions of the

²⁷⁵ ALIC, ‘Niagara’, p89, §3; see also LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p181f, §57f.

²⁷⁶ PCS §36, quoting BEM M§34; cf. PCS §§39, 40.

²⁷⁷ LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p268, §66.

²⁷⁸ PCS §39.

²⁷⁹ PCS §§37-40.

²⁸⁰ Cf. PCS §§18, 21, 38; Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology*, 3:p17f; Kasper, *Leadership in the Church*, p126.

²⁸¹ LRCJC, *The Apostolicity of the Church*, p132, §291; see also LRCJC, *From Conflict to Communion*, p68, §185.

²⁸² Chapter 10.3; Root, ‘Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Their Broader Ecumenical Significance’, p24.

faith of the Church, as the faithful confess the Church as part of the creed and as a communal and redeemed product of the Holy Spirit. The faith as given in the *traditio* of the Church gives the *communio* and is served by *successio*. However, since the meaning of *substantive apostolicity* is a settlement with the objectified content of a fragmented ecclesiology, it means an affirmation of the Lutheran emphasis on doctrine as an expression of the inner fiducial reality of the Church. And that reality was what the Evangelic reformers aimed at in their emphasis on the doctrinal formulation of the faith. At the same time, *substantive apostolicity* is a settlement with an objectified notion of *successio doctrinae* (as well as of *successio episcopale*).

Both the question about ordained ministry in relation to the *communio* of the Church, and the question about apostolicity, materialised in the Church's *traditio*, *successio*, and *communio*, concern the issue of ordination. In the interplay of the Spirit-given and Spirit-structured communion of the Church, ordination is important for the horizontal and vertical aspects of the *communio* and for the Church's *traditio* and *successio*, and concerns how the *local* and the *universal* dimensions of the Church are related to each other. In this interplay, ordination is a vital aspect of *successio*, although *successio* should not be reduced to the isolated act of ordination.²⁸³ This interplay is the eschatological life given by the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church,²⁸⁴ especially in its eucharistic life, of which ordination is an epicletic expression.

The issue is set out in a concentrated way in PCS §48, which describes how the sign of ordination in episcopal succession is effective in four ways. Episcopal ordination is described as a public act performed by a "group of bishops" in the context of the ecclesiology established earlier, which describes the Church as a Spirit-ordered inter-personal sacramental communion.²⁸⁵ Trusting in God's faithfulness to his Church, the bishop is ordained through the power of the Holy Spirit (first meaning),²⁸⁶ and as an expression of "the Church's intention to be faithful to God's initiative" (second meaning). Through the bishop's place in the eucharistic community, the bishop is understood to be a sacramental representation of Christ,²⁸⁷ and the catholicity of the Church as a communion of communions is sacramentalised in the college of bishops (third meaning),²⁸⁸ and "transmits ministerial office and its authority in accordance with God's will and institution" (fourth meaning).

The PCS elaborates the apostolic and catholic meaning of ordination with reference to *Niagara*, which in turn refers to the Council of Nicaea of 325,

²⁸³ PCS §§39-40.

²⁸⁴ See Chapter 15.1; PCS §§19, 38, 41-49.

²⁸⁵ PCS §19; LRCJC, 'The Eucharist (1978)', p198, §26. The eucharist is "at once the source and the climax of the church's life. Without the eucharistic community there is no full ecclesial community, and without the ecclesial community there is no real eucharistic community".

²⁸⁶ PCS §48.

²⁸⁷ PCS §44.

²⁸⁸ Cf. PCS §§43-44. For an elaboration of "communion of communions" see Tillard, *Church of Churches*, p29; Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p66.

with great importance for the understanding of the Church's structure and organisation. When a bishop is ordained in episcopal succession by three neighbouring bishops,²⁸⁹ according to Canon 4 of Nicea,²⁹⁰ there is a double conditioning. On the one hand, the bishop is attached to a particular eucharistic community; on the other hand, because the elected candidate is ordained by at least three neighbouring bishops, each representing their particular church, the new bishop is simultaneously linked with the apostolic college of the whole Church.²⁹¹ This is crucial for the concrete and realised catholicity and apostolicity of the Church, and concerns both doctrine and organisation²⁹² – i.e., *communio*, *traditio*, and *successio*. At the heart of this process is the issue of ecclesial recognition as part of the meaning of ordination. As the PCS understands it, episcopal ministry – exercised personally, collegially, and communally – is both local (regional) and universal.²⁹³ As part of the episcopal college, the bishops proclaim and safeguard the unity of the Church, “because through the collegiality of bishops the Christian community in local areas is related to the wider Church, and the universal Church to that community”.²⁹⁴

In the ordination of a new bishop for one of the local churches or provinces of the Church, both faith and organisation – both *traditio* and *successio* – are involved and are recognised by the group of ordaining bishops. Thus, when a bishop is ordained as the head of the local eucharistic community (i.e., a diocese), the catholicity and apostolicity of this particular local church is recognised by the college of bishops who represent the universal Church. That is the meaning of their approval of the new bishop as the head of the local eucharistic community, and that ultimately happens through their imposition of hands in the ordination and the activity of the Holy Spirit in response of the prayer of the Church. As with episcopal ordination in the *Apostolic Tradition* described earlier, this ecclesial recognition of the episcopal candidate as the head of the local church is crucial. According to this view, the election and ordination of a bishop is not only the affair of the local church, but also of other churches and ultimately of the whole Church.²⁹⁵ The local church has no right to accept one of their own as bishop without the consent and recognition of the whole Church (that is the meaning of Canon 4

²⁸⁹ PCS §§44, 49, 46 and 58 *b* (v) and (vi).

²⁹⁰ Canon 4: “It is by all means proper that a bishop should be appointed by all the bishops in the province; but should this be difficult, either on account of urgent necessity or because of distance, three at least should meet together, and the suffrages of the absent [bishops] also being given and communicated in writing, then the ordination should take place. But in every province the ratification of what is done should be left to the Metropolitan.” Quoted from Bradshaw, *Rites of Ordination*, p52.

²⁹¹ Cf. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p192f, 201f, 207.

²⁹² Cf. LRCJC, ‘The Ministry in the Church (1981)’, p267f, §§60–66; USA/LRCD, *Eucharist & Ministry*, p12, §15, p26, §44.

²⁹³ PCS §45.

²⁹⁴ PCS §44.

²⁹⁵ Chapter 14.3.2.

of the Council of Nicaea). The episcopal participation of the whole ecclesial communion is therefore not only important but necessary for the catholic and apostolic recognition of the local church, and thereby for the visible and corporate unity of the whole Church. The denial of such recognition by not letting other bishops participate in the ordination means, in practice, a loss of catholicity and apostolicity in the local church. This is why the PCS emphasises that the sign of episcopal succession effects the catholicity and the unity of the Church, and that earlier nation churches, separated as a consequence of the Reformation, can now recognise each other and unite on the basis of a common faith and a common sacramental life, served by a united ministry.²⁹⁶ This is important for the issue of validity and apostolic succession. The bishop does not succeed the apostles as an individual, but as head of the eucharistic community and part of the episcopal college.²⁹⁷ The collegial nature of episcopacy has importance for the issue of episcopal succession, because the individual bishop is a successor of the apostles not because of a 'pipeline' going back to one of the apostles, but through the bishop's communion with the entire episcopal college, which as a whole is the successor of the apostolic college and of the apostles' mission.²⁹⁸ The catholicity of the Church, manifested in the recognition of the new bishop in the imposition of hands by the bishops in ordination, functions as an instrument and an expression of the apostolicity of the Church.²⁹⁹ In this way both unity and continuity are kept together in the sacramental, eucharistic, pneumatological, structured, and eschatological life of the Church.

Together the bishops function as a necessary bond of communion,³⁰⁰ which is manifested as a visible eucharistic and pneumatological communion of communions.³⁰¹ The task of witnessing to the unity as a bond of communion is inseparable from the eucharist,³⁰² the sacrament of communion and thus of unity, which simultaneously demands unity in faith and one united ministry – i.e., *successio*, *traditio*, and *communio* (*substantive apostolicity*). The faith confessed and the ordained ministry serve the communion as apostolic and catholic in order to be part of the one and holy Church and thus be in communion with the Triune God.

This means that this theological understanding of the Church and of the episcopal ministry and college has consequences for, and is not separated from, the practical structuring and organisation of the Church as a commun-

²⁹⁶ PCS §28.

²⁹⁷ PCS §§32k, 44.

²⁹⁸ PCS §§41, 48, 50.

²⁹⁹ PCS §48; Kasper, *Leadership in the Church*, p125.; cf. USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p27, §100f.

³⁰⁰ PCS §32k.

³⁰¹ PCS §48; cf. Wood, *Sacramental Orders*, p70.

³⁰² PCS §§17, 43.

ion and, in the case of the PCS, of the structuring of the Porvoo Communion.³⁰³ This is described in §43 the PCS in these terms:

Oversight of the Church and its mission is the particular responsibility of the bishop. The bishop's office is one of service and communication within the community of believers and, together with the whole community, to the world. Bishops preach the word, preside at the sacraments, and administer discipline in such a way as to be representative pastoral ministers of oversight, continuity and unity in the Church. They have pastoral oversight of the area to which they are called. They serve the apostolicity, catholicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship and sacramental life. They have responsibility for leadership in the Church's mission. None of these tasks should be carried out in isolation from the whole Church.

Given the emphasis on ecclesial unity as a visible, sacramental, and corporal (Porvoo) communion served by a united episcopal ministry as bond of communion, the question remains as to how far the Porvoo churches and the Porvoo Communion as a whole have taken the practical implications of the ecclesiology of the PCS. That concerns the issue of implementation, and is the question for the next part and chapter.

³⁰³ E.g. PCS §§28, 43, 48. This connection in the PCS is the reason that the PCS issues in commitments concerning structure and organisation of the communion in PD §58 *b*.

Part IV: Conclusions and recommendations for the Porvoo Communion

16. The implementation of the Porvoo Common Statement

The aim of the PCS is not only to engage in a theoretical reflection about the divisive issues facing some churches, but to bring about the visible and corporate unity of the churches involved.¹ This specific purpose requires the conscious renewal and transformation of the Porvoo churches according to the ecclesiology described in the document, and means that unity is accomplished through the deepening of the churches' awareness of their identity.² The uniting process starts through the approval of the PD and is, as I have described it,³ two-fold: first, it establishes a visible communion of churches that previously experienced a reduced degree of communion that did not include visible sacramental communion. Second, it starts a process of transforming the member churches into an even more visible and corporate unity and communion. This aim in the Porvoo process requires both reception and implementation. That is already integrated into the PCS, which implies both the approval of the ecclesiology described in the PCS and the commitment to implement it in each church and to work for the realisation of the visible and corporate unity of the Porvoo Communion.⁴ The intended transformation of autonomous national churches, based on the consensus achieved in the PCS,⁵ is the precondition for the realisation of the PCS's goal – i.e., a transnational visible unity.

The question and challenge for the churches involved is whether, by subscribing to the PD, they have used its sacramental *koinonia* ecclesiology solely as a theoretical vehicle for unity, but without actually being renewed; or whether they have realised that the precondition for the solution is the deeper ecclesiology that goes beyond (but not against) their traditional Anglican or Lutheran confessional identities. The answer to these questions is

¹ PCS Foreword §6. "...to move forward from our existing piecemeal agreements towards the goal of visible unity."

² The motif of conversion or renewal and the need for practical implementation was emphasised by the Porvoo theologians. See Chapter 7 and articles by e.g. Tjørhom, 'Apostolicity and Apostolic Succession in the PCS', p171f; Tanner, 'The Anglican Position on Apostolic Continuity', p119; Tanner, 'The Concept of Unity in the PCS', p127; Hill, 'A Response to the Revd Dr T G Hardt', p14; Tustin, 'The Meaning of the Porvoo Agreement for the Anglican Churches'; Sykes, 'The Doctrine of the Church in the PCS', p89.

³ See Chapter 2.5.9.

⁴ PCS §§22, 28, 33, 55, 58.

⁵ PCS §55. "We have agreed on ..." Church, faith doctrine and apostolic episcopal ministry.

revealed by the amount of deepened ecclesiological consciousness in those churches, expressed through changes to church law, clarified organisation, greater independence from the national state (necessary for transnational unity), official documents, deeper devotion for and in the Church as mystery, and a greater willingness to be interdependent and influenced by joint decision-making.

As demonstrated in both the CoS and the CoE,⁶ it was common in the Porvoo debate to emphasise the future growing together and the development of common structures to implement this renewal process. Among the Orthodox theologians, it was noted that, on the basis of the PCS, there are no further obstacles to the union of the Porvoo churches in one single church body; “yet one gets the impression that these churches, for well understood historical and affective reasons, are not ready to give up their confessional identity easily for the sake of a united Church”.⁷ The challenge for the Porvoo churches after approving the PD is the question of implementation, to be transformed and go deeper into the sacramental, corporal, and structured unity given in Christ, as described in the PCS.⁸

In earlier chapters I focused on the content of the PCS, on how it was received and interpreted, and on clarifying the PCS’s ecclesiology and understanding of apostolic succession. In this chapter I will turn to the question of how the ecclesiology described in the PCS and approved in the PD has been implemented in the churches and in the Porvoo Communion. The basis for the continuing discussion is thus the ecclesiology established earlier in this thesis and culminating in Chapter 15, with the aim of investigating how the Porvoo churches have taken the practical consequences of the approved ecclesiology and its possibilities for the Porvoo Communion. As far as I can see, it is possible to discern three levels of implementation that are relevant for the Porvoo Communion:

1. The implementation of the ecclesiological content of the PCS in internal documents and legal regulations in the Porvoo churches.
2. Implementation in the form of common structures such as decision-making structures, common church law, and common liturgical regulations in the Porvoo Communion.
3. Implementation in the form of joint ordinations, exchanges of laity and clergy, joint training, sharing of resources, and link parishes and dioceses.

The three levels of implementation relate, on the one hand, how the Porvoo churches have implemented and owned the ecclesiology of the PCS; and, on the other hand, how the Porvoo Communion as a whole has made real the

⁶ See Chapters 3 and 4.

⁷ Tsetsis, ‘Leuenberg, Meissen Und Porvoo’, p185. Earlier quoted in Chapter 6.5.

⁸ PCS §§22, 33, 54, 58*b*, 60, 61.

requirements of the PCS/PD in its common life and structures. Below I start with an overview of how the churches on which this study has focused have answered the commitments taken on through the PD, followed by a discussion of the implementation of the PCS by the Porvoo Communion as a whole.

16.1. The implementation of the PCS in the churches

The present investigation has focused, *inter alia*, on three specific churches: the Church of England (CoE), the Church of Sweden (CoS), and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark (ELCD). In the reception of the PCS, those three churches opened themselves in different ways to the deeper ecclesiology in the PCS, with important implications for their continuing implementation. In the CoE it was stated that the PCS had helped her to deepen and clarify the understanding of apostolicity and succession. The House of Bishops' Occasional Paper *Apostolicity and Succession* is an expression of this,⁹ as well as of the broader ecumenical development behind the PCS. *Apostolicity and Succession* shows an important difference between the CoE and the other churches reviewed in this study. In the CoE it was clearly stated that the PCS and communion with the Nordic-Baltic churches meant a developed self-understanding. Likewise, in the debate it was stated how much the CoE could learn and adopt from the Nordic-Baltic churches. In the CoE, *Apostolicity and Succession* served as a presentation of the CoE's developed understanding of apostolicity and succession, and as such provided important background to the Porvoo debate. This understanding was further developed in the House of Bishops' Occasional Paper *Bishops in Communion – Collegiality in the Service of the Koinonia of the Church* (2000).¹⁰ The CoE House of Bishops' response, *May They All Be One*,¹¹ to John Paul II's encyclical *Ut unum sint* was similarly influenced by the PCS.

In comparison with the CoE, the theological and practical reception was not emphasised to the same degree in the CoS, and was definitely not emphasised in the ELCD.¹² What the CoE saw as an opportunity for development was seen as a threat by the ELCD. In the CoS, the PCS was seen primarily as a confirmation of changes already accomplished.¹³ With regard to ordained ministry, those changes were described in the Letter of the Bishops' Conference in the CoS, *Bishop, priest and deacon in the Church of Sweden* (1992),¹⁴ but the letter did not solve the remaining tension about the

⁹ CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*.

¹⁰ CoE, House of Bishops, *Bishops in Communion*.

¹¹ CoE, House of Bishops, *May They All Be One*, especially §41-43.

¹² Chapter 5.

¹³ Chapter 3.

¹⁴ CoS, the Bishops' Conference, *Bishop, Priest and Deacon in the CoS*.

historic episcopacy being both a gift from God and as not necessary (in the sense of *iure divino*). Neither had it been formally reflected upon in the CoS thereafter. Since approving the PCS, the CoS has published two ecumenical reports together with the local RCC. The first was *Kyrkan som sakrament* ('The Church as Sacrament'),¹⁵ published by the joint dialogue group of the CoS and the RC diocese of Stockholm; and the second report, *Justification in the life of the church*, was published by the Roman Catholic-Lutheran dialogue group in Sweden and Finland.¹⁶ However, none of those documents are official statements of the CoS, even though the PCS contributed to the content of both dialogue documents. In 2006 the CoS did sign an agreement with the Swedish Mission Covenant Church about a closer relationship. The agreement, and its claim to be consistent with the PCS, were heavily criticised both internally in the CoS and externally by the ELCF and the CoE as inconsistent with the PCS.¹⁷ The agreement expired in practice in 2009 when the Swedish Mission Covenant Church merged with the Methodist Church and the Baptist Church in Sweden, and they became one denomination. Since 2016 there has been a new agreement between the CoS and this new church body, but not as far-reaching as the PCS. Correspondingly the CoE has deepened its relations with the Methodist Church in England, a process that is ongoing and that has importance for the Porvoo Communion.¹⁸

The CoS approved a new Church Order (CO 2000) in 1999, as part of the process that led to the CoS's partly completed dis-establishment in 2000.¹⁹ The PCS was a part of the discussion that led to the formulation of the new Church Order; but the PCS did not influence CO 2000 to any greater extent.²⁰ Instead, the PCS was used to support and confirm changes that had been argued for even before the statement, such as the canonical recognition of the diaconate in the CoS. It is also possible to recognise the influence of BEM on CO 2000, such as the emphasis on baptismal practice as an act of the whole Church, and the need for education before baptism. Even though the three-fold order was fully re-introduced in the CoS during the 1980s, and the juridical consequences were recognised in CO 2000, the PCS has not been used as a basis for a new juridical formulation of the CoS's understanding of ecclesiology and episcopacy, with consequences for her synodical organisation. A reason for this could be the long process of dealing with the relation between the CoS and the Swedish state, in which it had been emphasised that there should be continuity between the church before 2000 and

¹⁵ LRCDS, *Kyrkan som sakrament*.

¹⁶ LRCDSF, *Justification in the Life of the Church*.

¹⁷ Eckerdal, 'Remissyttrande på uppmaning av Uppsala stifts domkapitel'.

¹⁸ CoE & Methodist Church, 'Mission and Ministry in Covenant'.

¹⁹ The dis-establishment in Sweden is only partly completed, and the formal description does not speak about dis-establishment but about "changed relations between church and state". There is still a secular law that regulates the identity of the CoS. Edqvist, *Från kyrkolag till kyrkoordning*, p27f.

²⁰ Edqvist, 'Borgåöverenskommelsen och KO2000'.

that after 2000.²¹ Thus the motivation for a church order formulated on the basis of the ecclesiological understanding in the PCS was not prominent. The development of, and tension between, an organisation closer to the state-church system and the secular political parties and a new more ecclesologically-motivated constitution consistent with the PCS remains an issue in the CoS.²² This lack of implementation in the CoS stands in contrast with the CoS's Porvoo debate, when most references to it expressed a willingness to deepen the CoS according to the ecclesiology of the PCS and to seek a visible and structured unity.²³ This openness also emphasised the possible practical consequences of the PCS, resulting in many exchanges between the CoS and the rest of the Porvoo Communion.

The ELCD has not published any papers of this kind since her approval of the PD. On the other hand, the ELCD's approval of the PD was much more recent than that of the other churches. The development of a synodical structure in the ELCD could be seen as an effect of the Porvoo debate in Denmark, rather than an effect of the PCS's ecclesiology. The question is about the extent to which the ecclesiology and the understanding of apostolicity and episcopacy in the PCS/PD are used as a basis for this synodical structure as gathered around and based on personal, collegial, and communal episcopal oversight, as described and explained in PCS §44. If the PD is not allowed to influence the formulation of the constitutional development of the ELCD, there is a gap between the ELCD's approval of the PD and its practical pursuance (this principle obviously applies to all the Porvoo Churches). This gap is consistent with the Danish suspicion about the PCS and the Anglican Church, the ELCD's call for independence, and its refusal to have Porvoo bishops participate in the ordination of new Danish bishops. However, this contrasts with the obligations subscribed to in the PD that state that joint episcopal ordinations are the norm, and are not optional.²⁴

Of the three sample churches, it is only the CoE that has worked the ecclesiological content of the PCS into its official documents, even though the Swedish CO 2000 was influenced by the PCS, and it has been incorporated into some of the CoS's ecumenical documents. Without any certainty, it may be asked whether this lack of doctrinal and legal integration of the PCS in the ELCD and the CoS is due to an inherited mentality of the old principle *ius in sacris et ius circa sacra* and its division between inner and outer, spirit and matter, theology and church law/organisation. If the PCS had been worked into the official doctrine and juridical regulations, the PCS might

²¹ Ibid., p1, 3f; Edqvist, *Från kyrkolag till kyrkoordning*, p10f.

²² Cf. Persenius, 'Kyrkoupfattning och kyrkoförfattning', p17ff; Ekström, *Makten över kyrkan*, p289ff.

²³ Chapter 3.2.1.

²⁴ PCS/PD §58 *b(vi)*; Meeting of the Church Lawyers of the Porvoo Communion, 'Commentary on the Porvoo Declaration', p387.

also have had a uniting and revitalising function internally.²⁵ It was used in this way in the CoE, which integrated the ecclesiology and understanding of succession into the document of its official teaching.²⁶ So far this potential has not been realised on either a doctrinal or a juridical level in the ELCD, and only to a small extent in the CoS.

In the reception of the ecclesiology of the PCS, some of the Porvoo churches were better prepared because they had already implemented important aspects of the progress of the ecumenical movement. The Anglican Communion has consciously developed its ecclesiological understanding in a more corporate direction that understands the Church as a communion derived from the communion in the Trinity. BEM is emphasised as an important influence that has been incorporated into Anglican life through formulations in the constitutions, canons, and official teachings of CoE dioceses and provinces.²⁷ In the CoS during the 20th century there was an extended ecclesiological discussion and development towards a sacramental ecclesiology.²⁸ BEM contributed to this discussion, as is clearly discernible in the ordination rites and the doctrinal description of ordained ministry.²⁹ The developments seen in the CoE and the CoS have not taken place so far in the ELCD.³⁰

Related to communal ecclesiology is the collegial understanding of episcopacy. The ELCD has not reflected much on this; rather, its practice mirrors a pre-conciliar individualistic understanding of ordained ministry.³¹ As in the CoE,³² the CoS has recognised the collegial nature of episcopacy, and the Bishops' Conference has stated that episcopal ordination means membership of the episcopal college, and that they are responsible for the oversight of the church.³³ However, in contrast to the CoE, this understanding is not integrated into the organisation of the CoS. The Bishops' Conference is in majority in the Doctrinal Commission of the General Synod; they have the

²⁵ See e.g. CoS, Chapter of the Diocese of Strängnäs, 'Response of the Diocesan Chapter of Strängnäs', p1. The Diocesan Chapter emphasised the importance of the immediate establishment of collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and church order, life and ministry.

²⁶ CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*. The Bishops' Conference of the CoS did the same when it published its doctrinal letter, *Bishop, priest and deacon in the Church of Sweden* (1992). The letter describes the office as three-fold, and is consistent with the Lutheran-Roman Catholic document *The Bishop's office* (1989), and with the development of the diaconate in the CoS during the 20th century, and with the three-fold ministry described in the PCS. However there has been no such publication in the CoS since its adoption of the PCS.

²⁷ Cox, *Priesthood in a New Millennium*, p123ff., 137.

²⁸ E.g. Brodd, 'The Church as Sacrament in the Writings of Yngve Brilioth'; Persenius, *Kyrkans identitet*; LRCDS, *Kyrkan som sakrament*; LRCDSF, *Justification in the Life of the Church*.

²⁹ CoS, the Bishops' Conference, *Bishop, Priest and Deacon in the CoS*.

³⁰ Chapter 5.

³¹ Chapter 8.1.2.

³² CoE, House of Bishops, *Bishops in Communion*.

³³ CoS, the Bishops' Conference, *Bishop, Priest and Deacon in the CoS*.

right to speak at the General Synod, but no right to vote. This organisation is in contrast to the ecclesiology of the PCS, in which the oversight is performed personally, collegially, and communally by the bishops in a united ministry. In the ELCD it is emphasised that the bishops only act individually, and when they meet it is only as individual bishops.³⁴

The intention of the PCS is to make real the visible and corporate unity that belongs to the Church of Christ beyond the anomalous situation of division.³⁵ The episcopal ministry in succession is used as an expression of and “a means for achieving” this unity.³⁶ Behind this understanding of the episcopal ministry is a growing awareness of the relation between the local church and the universal Church³⁷ – i.e., an increased consciousness of the Church’s communal nature as catholic and apostolic.³⁸ The Malta report had already stated:

It was recognised on the Lutheran side that no local church should exist in isolation since it is a manifestation of the universal church. In this sense the importance of a ministerial service of the communion of churches was acknowledged and at the same time reference was made to the problem raised for Lutherans by their lack of such an effective service of the unity.³⁹

This quote was primarily about the Petrine office, but it can also be related to the whole structure of the Church and to the need for a common structuring – which, according to BEM and the PCS, is based on the three-fold ministry. This discussion has increasingly been taken into account in the LWF⁴⁰ and in the Anglican Communion.⁴¹ It is emphasised in BEM, and in practice also in the PCS,⁴² that all the churches have to evaluate their ordained ministry in order to see if it is possible to find a more appropriate form.⁴³ Among the three sample churches, both the CoS and the CoE have responded to BEM’s call, while the ELCD has only recently and tentatively begun that development.⁴⁴ This difference might be why the PCS was seen as more ‘foreign’ in Denmark (and Germany) than it was in Sweden, England and the other Porvoo churches. In conclusion, it can be stated that, still to a large extent,

³⁴ See Chapter 5.2.

³⁵ PCS §§22, 60, 61.

³⁶ PCS §32k.

³⁷ E.g. USA/LRCD, *The Church as Koinonia of Salvation*, p14, §52.

³⁸ PCS §48.

³⁹ LRCJC, ‘Malta’, p185, §66; Cf. LRCDSF, *Justification in the Life of the Church*, p105, §308.

⁴⁰ LWF, ‘The Lund Statement’, p8ff, §43ff.

⁴¹ Doe, ‘The Contribution of Common Principles’.

⁴² Cf. PCS §58b(vii) about the mutual commitment to develop the Porvoo Communion’s understanding of the diaconal ministry.

⁴³ BEM M§24f.

⁴⁴ See Chapter 5.6.4 and my analysis of ELCD, CIR, ‘Signatory Declaration PD’. In this document there is a development in emphasis that, with reference to the LWF Lund statement from 2007, comes closer to a three-fold (or two-fold) ministry than earlier in the ELCD.

the PCS awaits doctrinal and legal implementation in the Porvoo churches, although this has been accomplished in various degrees in those churches.

The signing of the PD means the approval of the holistic and fiducial ecclesiology of the PCS as described in this thesis, and the commitment to manifest this in structures and in continuing work to overcome remaining differences.⁴⁵ The question is how, and to what extent, this ecclesiology has been materialised in and by the Porvoo Communion as a whole – the question to which I now turn.

16.2. The realisation of the Porvoo Communion

As established in this thesis, the Church is understood in the PCS as a mystery, a communal people, and the body of Christ, in trinitarian, missiological, sacramental, and eschatological perspective. The Church is sent into the world as an effective sign, instrument, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God (*sacramentum mundi*), a people that is one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.⁴⁶ Crucial for this mission and ministry in the world is the unity of the Church, because if there is no unity in the Church, there is no communion, and in consequence she cannot serve as one people in the world. This unity – the opposite of division, but inclusive of diversity – is understood in the PCS as visible, sacramental, and corporate, and is materialised and served by bonds of communion.⁴⁷ The unity and the communion of the Church is described in the PCS:

Such a level of communion has a variety of interrelated aspects. It entails agreement in faith together with the common celebration of the sacraments, supported by a united ministry and forms of collegial and conciliar consultation in matters of faith, life and witness. These expressions of communion may need to be embodied in the law and regulations of the Church. For the fullness of communion all these visible aspects of the life of the Church require to be permeated by a profound spiritual communion, a growing together in a common mind, mutual concern and a care for unity (Phil. 2: 2).⁴⁸

As described earlier, the PCS's relating of the apostolicity of the Church and its missionary sending into the world implies that apostolicity is a mark of the Church that is visible,⁴⁹ which further means that the visible unity made real through bonds of communion is a vital aspect of the catholicity and apostolicity of the Church understood as a communion and the body of Christ

⁴⁵ PCS §§28, 33.

⁴⁶ Chapter 2.5.5.

⁴⁷ Chapter 10; PCS §§20, 22, 23, 24.

⁴⁸ PCS §28.

⁴⁹ Chapter 7.3.

sent into the world.⁵⁰ The question that arises is the extent to which this ecclesiology has been made real by the Porvoo churches in the Porvoo Communion itself. Without such a realisation, the Church's confession as catholic and apostolic is merely an idea with little or no relation to the practical life of the Church. The approval of the PD means a reconciled and "united ministry",⁵¹ not only a mutually-recognised ministry.⁵² The concrete and material basis and expression of this mutual recognition and unification is the joint episcopal ordinations, when the ordaining bishops recognise the new bishop and the local church of this bishop, and receive the new bishop into the episcopal college. As noted, the ecclesial recognition expressed through joint episcopal ordinations is essential for the concretisation of the Church's catholicity and apostolicity, and the establishment of the collegial responsibility of the bishops.⁵³ While the joint episcopal ordination is the concrete basis and expression for the establishment of the episcopal collegiality in succession of the apostolic college,⁵⁴ the concrete and material expression of the episcopal collegiality is the joint episcopal teaching, leadership, and decision-making as essential bonds of communion.⁵⁵

According to the PCS, the episcopal college proclaims and safeguards the unity of the Church, "because through the collegiality of bishops the Christian community in local areas is related to the wider Church, and the universal Church to that community".⁵⁶ As a single college, the bishops of the entire Porvoo Communion are collegially responsible (*magisterium*) for the oversight of the Church communion and its mission of serving "the apostolicity, catholicity and unity of the Church's teaching, worship and sacramental life. They have responsibility for leadership in the Church's mission".⁵⁷ This episcopal and collegial responsibility, according to the PCS, is exercised "at the local, regional and universal levels of the Church's life",⁵⁸ and made real through "forms of collegial and conciliar consultations".⁵⁹ The collegial and conciliar consultations are understood as being in continuity with the councils described in Acts 15, and throughout the history of the Church, when the apostles, and later their successors – the apostolic and episcopal leaders – gathered for councils "in the face of the threat of division".⁶⁰ According to the PCS, the united "ministry of pastoral oversight (episcopate), exercised in

⁵⁰ Chapter 15.3.

⁵¹ PCS §§28, 54.

⁵² Cf. Meyer, 'Some Observations Concerning the Unity Concept of the PCS', p139.

⁵³ PCS §§44, 48, referring to ALIC, 'Niagara', p109, §91; Chapter 15:3.

⁵⁴ Chapter 15.1.

⁵⁵ PCS §§20, 43.

⁵⁶ PCS §44.

⁵⁷ PCS §43. Cf. this elaboration of episcopal oversight with the traditional description of episcopal power as *potestas jurisdictionis* (leadership), *potestas magisteri* (teaching), and *potestas ordinis* (the sacramental responsibility to ordain).

⁵⁸ PCS §45.

⁵⁹ PCS §58b(viii).

⁶⁰ PCS §25.

personal, collegial and communal ways, is necessary as witness to and safeguard of the unity and apostolicity of the Church”.⁶¹

The PCS and the commitments in the PD challenge the Porvoo Communion to implement the statement’s ecclesiology here described and to develop the necessary bonds/instruments to nurture and make the Porvoo Communion real as a communion served by a united ministry. This development is an integral part of the intention of the PCS/PD.⁶² As noted in chapter 15.2, apostolicity in the early church was a characterisation of both doctrine and organisation or structure. That is also the case in the PCS,⁶³ which does not separate between content and form, but keeps them together in a sacramentally structured whole. The issue of unity and of how the PCS relates it to the Church’s structure or organisation has caused some to ask what ‘model of unity’ the PCS represents.⁶⁴ According to Harding Meyer, the PCS matches the model of ‘unity in reconciled diversity’ – considering that the PCS states that visible unity “should not be confused with uniformity”⁶⁵ – but, given the statement’s emphasis that structured form is required for visible unity, he noted that the foremost model of unity in the PCS is ‘corporate’ or ‘organic union’.⁶⁶ Against that description of the concept of unity in the PCS, he stated that a difficulty in applying the model of ‘organic unity’ to the PCS was that the model has not normally been used for the relationship between national churches, but for churches in the same area.

The difficulty in approaching the PCS through one or several models of unity is not surprising, since those models are not ends in themselves, but means to visible unity, while the PCS aims at achieving the visible and corporate unity of the churches concerned through a realised communion. While it has been argued that a *koinonia* ecclesiology could in itself be understood as a model of unity,⁶⁷ there are also important differences between models of the Church and the concept of *koinonia*. This is because *koinonia* (or *communio*) is neither a model nor an image, but the foundational reality of what it means to be Church.⁶⁸ The PCS understands this communal reality that is “ultimately grounded in the communion of God the Holy Trinity”,⁶⁹ and a gift by the Holy Spirit which concerns the entire life of the Church as *successio*, *traditio*, and *communio* – i.e., both doctrine and organisation.

⁶¹ PCS §32k.

⁶² Cf. Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, 131. “Whether the Porvoo Communion deepens its unity in a convincing way in the future will have much to do with whether, and how, it develops those personal, collegial and communal ways of common decision making and teaching with authority that are integral to the Porvoo portrait of unity, and whether the members are willing to heed the advice and decisions of those structures.”

⁶³ Chapter 15; PCS, Chapter IV “Episcopacy in the service of the apostolicity of the Church”.

⁶⁴ Chapter 7.1.

⁶⁵ PCS §51.

⁶⁶ Meyer, ‘Some Observations Concerning the Unity Concept of the PCS’, p136.

⁶⁷ Kinnamon, *Truth and Community*, p89.

⁶⁸ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p51, 68.

⁶⁹ PCS §23.

This relates further to two other important issues. The first concerns the concepts of organisation and structure and what they really mean; the second issue is about the meaning and the relationship of the concepts *communion* and *church*. As noted in this thesis, the PCS understands the visible communion of the Church to be structured through bonds of communion.⁷⁰ This raises the question about how the Church will be structured – or, in other words, how she will organise herself. The PCS does not use the word ‘organise’, which in itself only means how two or more people organise a particular feature of common interest. But, given that the PD states that the Porvoo Communion commits itself to establish the necessary bonds or instruments of communion, I will use the term in this chapter. However, by ‘organisation’ is not meant a monolithic organisation (as in, for example, a business company), nor a mere confederation of churches (which applies more to cooperation in work and life than to a visible and realised unity in faith and order),⁷¹ but how the Church is structured as a communion. The structure of the Church is understood in the PCS as an interplay of *successio*, *traditio*, and *communio*, characterised as both catholic and apostolic; and it indicates that the Church is a sacramental and corporative reality, not a merely platonic reality. It is that Spirit-given structure of the Church that is the meaning of *substantive apostolicity*, and it ultimately shapes the Church – instituted by Jesus Christ and constituted by the Holy Spirit⁷² – and brings about communion with the salvific reality of Christ.⁷³ To say that the Church is a Spirit-structured communion is not primarily to describe the hierarchy or the institution of the Church; rather, these are consequences of the spiritual and existential structuring of the whole Church through faith, baptism, the eucharist, communion, and – in its service – the ordained ministry.⁷⁴ Ecclesiologically, it is this inner apostolic and catholic reality that needs to be materialised and made visible in the structure and the life of the Porvoo Communion in order for the Porvoo churches to achieve a faithful implementation of the PCS/PD and make its acknowledged communion real. That implementation concerns the life both of the particular provincial church, and of the Porvoo Communion as a whole.

The second important issue is about how ‘communion’ and ‘Porvoo Communion’ relate to the concept ‘church’. The purpose of the PCS is to establish an ecclesiological basis for the Porvoo churches to be transformed into the visible and corporate unity of the Church, understood as a structured and corporate communion, the body of Christ. This means that the established, visible, and corporate (Porvoo) Communion is one church that is

⁷⁰ PCS §§22, 32 k, 58b.

⁷¹ Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p53ff.

⁷² Chapter 14.3.

⁷³ Cf. Chapter 10.3.

⁷⁴ Cf. Zizioulas, *Being as Communion*, p245.

established beyond earlier Lutheranism and Anglicanism,⁷⁵ understood as a communal church, a communion of communions served by a united ministry on the local, regional, and universal level of the Church (although that church – i.e., the Porvoo Communion – is still provisional, given that the established unity does not embrace all churches).⁷⁶ That understanding challenges the Porvoo churches to a faithful implementation of the commitments they have mutually taken on through their approval of the PD.

I will discuss some bonds of communion that follow from the PCS's understanding of the Church as a structured communion sent into the world. Those 'bonds' are collegial and conciliar consultations as means for common decision-making, regulated legally,⁷⁷ and a united sacramental life in a common liturgical tradition,⁷⁸ aiming to the proclamation of the gospel in the world.⁷⁹ This concerns both the identity of the Church, and how it communicates both internally and externally. This is why I also intend to touch upon the identity of the Porvoo Communion and the role of the media.⁸⁰

16.2.1. The mission and the ministry of the Church

According to the PCS, as I have noted repeatedly in this thesis, the Church is a sacramental community sent into the world as a sign, instrument, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God, and aiming at the communion of the entire world. That missionary purpose is not understood in an idealistic sense, but very realistically, because the whole purpose of the Porvoo process is the effective mission and ministry of the Porvoo Communion as one communal church in Europe. Consequently, the PCS was published as *Together in Mission and Ministry – The Porvoo Common Statement with Essays on Church and Ministry in Northern Europe*. Although this title limits the mission and ministry to Northern Europe, the PCS does in fact have the whole of Europe and beyond in mind.⁸¹ The missionary sending into the world, and the need for corporate and visible unity, are described in PCS §22:

Despite our sins and schisms, the unity to which we are summoned has already begun to be manifested in the Church. It demands fuller visible embodiment in structured form, so that the Church may be seen to be, through the Holy Spirit, the one Body of Christ and the sign, instrument and foretaste of the Kingdom [within Europe and beyond].⁸²

⁷⁵ Cf. Tanner, 'The Concept of Unity in the PCS', p127.

⁷⁶ PCS §§60-61.

⁷⁷ E.g. PCS §28, PD 58 b(viii).

⁷⁸ PCS §§7, 8, 29, 32 e.

⁷⁹ PCS §§17, 50.

⁸⁰ Cf. §§38, 43, 50.

⁸¹ PCS §§10-13.

⁸² PCS §22 does not speak of the Church's mission in Europe, but in more general terms. However, *Europe* is mentioned no less than 19 times in the PCS, and five times on the cover

However, so far – due to the lack of decision-making structures – the history of the Porvoo Communion has not revealed much common witness in European society. In an increasingly globalised world, in which the national state is decreasing in importance, it is both necessary and a possibility for the churches to unite across national borders. To draw a comparison: this internationalisation has taken place in modern times in many areas, such as transport, business, banking, the media, entertainment, recreation, education, and healthcare.⁸³ For national churches to remain within their national borders is, in this perspective, not an option. Since the nation state system has been relativised through globalisation and international cooperation – such as in the European Union and the United Nations – there is little reason for the national churches to continue as autonomous national churches. If they are to fulfil their mission and ministry, and proclaim the gospel in the modern world, they have to function both nationally and internationally.

The process of internationalisation is also a theological imperative for the Church, since such a universal understanding follows from its self-understanding as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. Elaborated bonds or instruments of communion and the “fuller visible embodiment in structured form” are not just a functional requirement for common decision-making: they are a consequence of the communal nature of the Church and of episcopal collegiality and its apostolic mission (cf. 1 Cor 12, Eph 4:3-6, and Chapter 15.3). As was described earlier,⁸⁴ in the PCS ontology and function should not be seen as contradictory but as combined in a sacramental understanding of the Church. The Church is communal, served by a united episcopal ministry, in order to fulfil its mission in the world as sign, instrument, and foretaste of the Kingdom of God.⁸⁵ Therefore it is necessary for the Porvoo Communion to develop its bonds of communion in order to make its ecclesiology and communion real and visible in structured form, so that it makes its mission and ministry real and effective in Europe and beyond.

16.2.2. United ministry and instruments of communion

Several questions were raised in the Porvoo debate about how the Porvoo Communion might function after the PD had been approved.⁸⁶ Roelvink, to take one example, noted that the statement never really describes how the Porvoo Communion will be administered and organised, and it never speci-

of *Together in Mission and Ministry*. On the church's mission in Europe and beyond, see particularly PCS §10-13: *Our Common Mission Today*.

⁸³ Cf. Schön, ‘Lissabonstrategin i historiskt perspektiv’, p26. This example does not mean that I argue that the church should adopt the model of business administration; it is simply an example of the globalisation of the modern culture in which the Church lives out its mission and ministry.

⁸⁴ Chapter 11.

⁸⁵ PCS §§17, 18.

⁸⁶ See Part II, Chapters 3-8; cf. PCS Foreword §11.

fies how the Porvoo Communion's episcopal collegiality should function concretely across national borders. Instead, according to Roelvink, the PCS seems to describe a spiritualised collegiality without any legal consequences.⁸⁷ Roelvink's conclusion was that the concept of 'catholicity' in the PCS needs to be developed and clarified. While Roelvink's critique of the PCS as a spiritualised collegiality does not do it justice – it does in fact speak about one united ministry and the visible unity embodied in the law of the Church – the need for clarity about the organisation and the development of legal regulations is rightly identified. Those are not described in the PCS; instead they are only hinted at, and left for the Porvoo Communion to develop after its establishment. Österlin also noted this problem in 1995, saying that “the last of the ten commitments [of PD §58 b] appear relatively modest: ‘to establish a contact group to nurture our growth in communion and to co-ordinate the implementation of this agreement’. The word ‘contact-group’ does not sound very empowering or authoritative”.⁸⁸

The PCS's lack of a clear description of the organisation and the legal regulations of the Porvoo Communion refers to a well-known and much-discussed dilemma in international law and political science,⁸⁹ which could be described as follows: Either an agreement is formulated in general terms and in principle, making it possible for many nations to approve it; or the treaty is formulated with clear legal regulations for the future, such that fewer nations would find it possible to sign it. In the former case, the agreement will be difficult to implement, because it is written in an open-ended way and can be interpreted according to individual interests. In the latter case, the implementation will be helped by clear regulations and commitments, but probably with a smaller number of parties approving it. The Porvoo delegates had to face this dilemma when they formulated the PCS and its Declaration, and they took a middle way: they elaborated the PCS and the PD with no clear description of how the communion should be organised. At the same time, the ecclesiology of the PCS describes an episcopally-ordered church in which bishops exercise personal, collegial, and communal leadership “at the local, regional and universal levels of the Church's life”.⁹⁰ Through the PD the churches commit themselves to follow and implement the communion in accordance with PCS/PD §58,⁹¹ although the legal impli-

⁸⁷ See Chapter 6.4.4 and Roelvink, ‘Borgåöverenskommelsen sedd med katolska ögon’, p343; Roelvink, ‘The Apostolic Succession in the PCS’, p350f; See also; Morerod, ‘Réflexions sur l'Accord de Porvoo’, p98ff; Morerod, ‘Reflections on Five Recent Agreements’, p101; Puglisi, ‘The Porvoo Common Statement’, p225; Raem, ‘Leuenberg, Meissen und Porvoo’, p181f.

⁸⁸ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p286; see also Hugason, ‘De kyrkorättsliga implikationerna av Borgå-överenskommelsen’, p112.

⁸⁹ E.g. Koskeniemi, *From Apology to Utopia*, 474ff; Schön, ‘Lissabonstrategin i historiskt perspektiv’.

⁹⁰ PCS §45.

⁹¹ See Chapter 2.5.9.

cations of the statement's ecclesiology are not spelt out. If the Porvoo delegates had chosen a more regulated approach in the PD, it is likely that some of the signatory churches would not have approved it. Its more open approach made it more acceptable, but made the implementation process more complicated.

Still, the Porvoo churches do bind themselves to following the commitments formulated in PCS/PD §58 *b*, based on the ecclesiology described in the PCS and acknowledged in PCS/PD §58 *a*. One of the obligations is that the churches commit themselves “to establish appropriate forms of collegial and conciliar consultation on significant matters of faith and order, life and work”.⁹² The churches further commit themselves in the PD “to establish a contact group to nurture our growth in communion and to co-ordinate the implementation of this agreement”.⁹³ In accordance with the commitment in PCS/PD §58 *b*, the Porvoo Communion has so far established the *Primates' meetings* (every two years), and since 1998 the *Church Leaders' Consultations* (every four years) that include bishops, clergy, and lay representatives, as instruments of communion.⁹⁴ In order to moderate the further growth in communion, the Porvoo Communion has also established a *Contact Group*, consisting of one Anglican and one Lutheran bishop as co-chairs, plus a staff member from each church's central secretariat, who meet on a regular basis. However, those bonds or instruments of communion are not integrated into the canonical regulations of the Porvoo churches, but are only informally organised, and as consequence have an unclear mandate and competence to make decisions. This lack of formal implementation is a church law deficiency to which I will return below.

The structures of the Porvoo Communion have so far coordinated the practical exchanges, such as joint ordinations, invitations to the wider Porvoo Communion to participate in the General Synods of individual Porvoo churches, diocesan twinnings, interchanges of clergy, and a common Prayer Diary. Special consultations are held from time to time.

The PD further commits the churches “to work towards a common understanding of diaconal ministry”.⁹⁵ It is on this concrete issue that the Porvoo Communion has worked most dedicatedly. So far, three theological consultations have been held about the understanding of the diaconate.⁹⁶ On two occasions the Porvoo Communion has taken part *as a communion* in the dialogue with the Orthodox churches. Two informal conferences have been

⁹² PCS/PD §58 *b(viii)*; cf. PCS §§20, 28.

⁹³ PCS/PD §58 *b(x)*.

⁹⁴ www.porvoocommunion.org. The Church Leaders' meeting has met in Turku, Finland (1998), Tallinn, Estonia (2002), Cardiff, Wales (2006), Sigtuna, Sweden (2010), and York, England (2014).

⁹⁵ PCS/PD §58 *b(vii)*.

⁹⁶ London (2006), Oslo (2009) and Dublin (2013), www.porvoocommunion.org. See also; Repo, ‘Diaconate - Presbyterate - Episcopate’; Pädam, *Ordination of Deacons*.

organised in this dialogue.⁹⁷ Besides *Together in Mission and Ministry*, two theological anthologies have been published by the Porvoo Communion.⁹⁸ There are also other more informal structures such as the *Porvoo Research Network*,⁹⁹ the *Anglo-Nordic-Baltic Theological Conference*, and conferences for various church functionaries.¹⁰⁰

Considering all those aspects of sharing and the growth in communion, the positive impact on the Porvoo Churches has been significant. Changes in legislation, joint ordinations (the ELCD is so far an exception), exchanges between dioceses, parishes, conferences, education, clergy and laity – these have all been important for an elaborated consciousness of ecclesial and spiritual fellowship.¹⁰¹ Nevertheless, although all this is part of the intended outcomes of the PCS, and has great significance, it does not address the aim of the PCS to establish visible unity as one sacramental, corporal, and structured communion manifested by a common faith and a common sacramental life, with a united ministry making common decisions for the whole Porvoo Communion and its mission and ministry in Northern Europe and beyond.¹⁰² The establishment of the Primates' Meeting, the Church Leaders' Consultation, and the Contact Group may be seen as early, embryonic collegial and conciliar structures of the Communion, but not yet as sufficiently elaborated as its ecclesiology implies. As long as the united ministry acknowledged in the PCS/PD does not take visible shape in common decision-making structures, the consequence will be that the Porvoo Communion in practice will function as a confederation, but not as that visible sacramental (Porvoo) communion that the PCS/PD declares the Church to be.¹⁰³

⁹⁷ The conferences were held in Järvenpää (Finland), 1-4 December 2005, and in Brâncoveanu Monastery/Sâmbăta de Sus (Romania), 27-30 March 2008. Both meetings invited observers from the Community of Protestant Churches (CPCE), the Armenian Apostolic Church, and the ELCD (at that time not part of the Porvoo Communion). For documentation, see *Rescriptio* 1/2006 and *Rescriptio* 1/2009.

⁹⁸ Karttunen, Fagerli, and Nathaniel, *Towards Closer Unity*; Wingate and Myreliid, *Why Inter-faith?*

⁹⁹ www.porvoocommunion.org; On the initiative in 2003 of the author, Sven-Erik Brodd, and Tiit Pädam, the *Porvoo Research Network* was established at the theological seminary of the EELC in Tallinn in February 2005. The network functions as an independent organisation for the exchange and inventory of research concerning the Porvoo Communion.

¹⁰⁰ www.porvoocommunion.org; Karttunen, Fagerli, and Nathaniel, *Towards Closer Unity*.

¹⁰¹ See, e.g., Tustin, 'The Impact of the Porvoo Agreement'; Toy, 'Is Porvoo Working?'; 'Reflections on the Reception and Implementation of Porvoo in the Churches', in; Tjørhom, 'The Church and Its Apostolicity', p47ff; Karttunen, 'The Porvoo Churches - Living in Communion in Finland', p66ff.

¹⁰² PCS §20.

¹⁰³ Cf. e.g. Hill, 'The Anglo-Nordic-Baltic Conversations', p13. The PCS aims "at a goal of unity which is more profound than mere federalism or a monolithic organisational unity. Full sacramental unity must mean true sharing in life and counsel, including resources and decision making". See also CoE, House of Bishops, *Apostolicity and Succession*, p19. A number of scholars have noted that the establishment of collegial and conciliar structures that are integral to the ecclesiology in the PCS/PD are crucial for the further implementation and realisation of the visible unity. See quotations above by Roelvink and Österlin and e.g. Meyer,

Since the required establishment of structural instruments (bonds) of communion is not juridically formulated, it has been done on a voluntary basis – and not without difficulties. There are no regulations for how those rather informal conferences should be organised, or what kind of mandate they have, or how those instruments relate to each other. While the composition of the Primates meeting is obvious due to its name, there is lack of clarity about the composition of the Church Leaders' Consultations and about its name. 'Church leader' would primarily mean the bishops, but it is said that the Church Leaders' Consultations consist of bishops, clergy, and lay, consistent with PCS §44, which states that "the ministry of oversight is exercised personally, collegially and communal". The same paragraph interprets the communal exercise of oversight as "bishops together with other ministers and the whole community", which in most of the Porvoo churches "takes synodical form". This implies that the Church Leaders' Consultations would consist of the bishops and some clergy and lay. However, judging by the communiqués of the Church Leaders' Consultations, both the purpose and the composition of the consultations are unclear.¹⁰⁴ It is unclear in what way the lay and clergy participating in the consultations are church leaders, and how they represent their own churches. Also, the purpose seems, as the word 'consultation' indicates, to be primarily to meet and learn more about each other. According to the communiqués, the general aim is to nurture a growing together,¹⁰⁵ for which meetings and exchanges are both necessary and important. Nevertheless, the conferences here described do not measure up to the ecclesiology of the PCS nor to the commitments subscribed to in PCS/PD §58. The "collegial and conciliar consultation" in §58 *b(viii)* implies common decision-making in matters of "faith and order, life and work".¹⁰⁶ This is described in the PCS as the Church having bonds (instruments) of communion "strong enough to enable it to bear effective witness in the world, to guard and interpret the apostolic faith, to take decisions, to teach authoritatively, and to share its goods with those in need".¹⁰⁷ Those structures should also function in more difficult times when common ground seems out of reach. While the commitments subscribed to in the PD are mandatory – in both moral and juridical perspective – a difficulty for the

'Some Observations Concerning the Unity Concept of the PCS', p139; Tanner, 'The Concept of Unity in the PCS', 131; Tudorie, 'The Porvoo Common Statement from an Orthodox Perspective', p297.

¹⁰⁴ See the communiqués from the consultations in Karttunen, Fagerli, and Nathaniel, *Towards Closer Unity*, p337. The communiqué from the Sigtuna consultations in 2010 states (p340) that "the signatory churches were invited to send a delegation of 3, which normally includes the Primate or Presiding Bishop; the General Secretary or equivalent; a woman who is engaged in the work of the church at national level and a lay person who is engaged in the work of the church at national level. If possible, one of the delegation members should be a young person (under 35)."

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p340.

¹⁰⁶ PCS §26; cf. PCS §§26-28, 44, 45.

¹⁰⁷ PCS §20.

Porvoo Communion is that so far there is no institutional structure that is “strong enough to enable it to bear effective witness in the world” and that can “guard and interpret the apostolic faith, to take decisions, to teach authoritatively”,¹⁰⁸ or handle deviations from the obligations subscribed to in the PD. Instead, the Porvoo Communion relies on the individual church’s goodwill and faithfulness to the PD. Without the development of those structures as bonds/instruments of communion, the Porvoo Communion is not established according to the declaration’s intentions, and it will not be able to handle issues of diversity that threaten their unity and hinder the Church’s effective mission and ministry in Europe. The Porvoo Communion will not be able to exercise doctrinal discernment or to issue authoritative statements that express the collegiality of the entire Porvoo Communion in relation to other churches and the secular world.¹⁰⁹ This development in structure and church law remains to be realised by the Porvoo Communion for effective mission and ministry in Europe and beyond.

One reason that the Porvoo Communion so far has not developed the fully organisational implications of its ecclesiology may be that such establishment of necessary instruments of communion would be financially costly – although PD §58 *b(i)* describes the commitment to “share resources”. While this might well be one reason, others might be the diverse interpretations of the PCS’s ecclesiology and the call for independence in some of the Porvoo Churches, which makes it harder to receive the ecclesiology and to implement it in each church. A further reason might be the heritage of the state-church system (particularly in the Nordic churches) and the confusion of secular political and ecclesial structures. All of this has importance for the issue of the development of a formalised structure for the Porvoo Communion and its capacity for common decision-making.¹¹⁰ Still, in the present state of an underdeveloped structure, there is nothing preventing the persons responsible for the oversight, leadership, and teaching of the Church – i.e., the bishops – from meeting more regularly and formulating joint statements for the whole Porvoo Communion on matters of doctrine, pastoral leadership, political issues (for example, migration), the European Union, or liturgical and ethical issues, or to establish a secretariat. This concerns the issue of common decision-making for the Porvoo Communion, while the issue of a lack of financial means is a practical question that might be solved through creativity, planning, sharing, and hard work.

¹⁰⁸ PCS §20.

¹⁰⁹ For example, Bishop Persenius of Uppsala, at that time Church Secretary of the CoS, stated in 1994 that the future ecumenical relations of the CoS shall be based upon the PCS and that the dialogue with the Reformation churches on the continent shall be approached together with all the Nordic churches as a part of the Porvoo Communion. Persenius, ‘Svenska kyrkan och konfessionell blockbildning’, p93.

¹¹⁰ For example, the Central Board of the CoS stated in 1994 that the “practical realisation [of the Porvoo Communion] is a challenge for the future”. CoS, the Central Board, ‘Svenska kyrkans centralstyrelsens skrivelse till kyrkomötet 1994:5’, p8; full quotation in Chapter 3.2.2.

16.2.3. Common decision-making

In the implementation of the PCS towards visible unity, rather than a confederation of churches, there is probably no more effective way to act than with common decision-making, rather than with a number of conferences that aim to coordinate but that do little or make no real decisions. The risk of this kind of loose structure is that it produces a number of conferences (with more or less the same persons participating) rather than real, conscious, and directed step-by-step implementation. Such a description is not an evaluation of the quality of the work of those participating in these conferences; it simply points to a structural problem and deficiency in the Porvoo Communion. The risk is obvious: that the implementation of the PCS becomes more artificial than real. If the instruments of the Porvoo Communion are not given formal decision-making competence, they will necessarily hang in the air, searching for a reason to exist. This character of the results of the various meetings of the instruments of the communion is obvious in their communiqués that speak about communion, a shared life, and the need for interaction in order to implement the declared unity.¹¹¹ However, if the role of the instruments had been formalised, there would have been less need to describe the importance of sharing and interaction. Rather, the instruments would have represented and shaped that interaction through their collegiality, conciliarity, and forward-looking decision-making.

That the Porvoo Communion, even after some twenty years, has not yet developed the required instruments of communion shows that there is a certain distance between the approved ecclesiology of the PCS and the concrete willingness of the member churches to submit to each other and to the Communion. (A complicating factor is whether the churches have in fact understood this ecclesiology.) The issue of implementation relates to several issues, such as structure, church law, liturgy, the diaconate, and social and individual ethical questions. So far the issues have been dealt with by the churches individually, rather than by the Porvoo Communion as a whole. There has been a sharing of experiences and reflection on various issues concerning the Porvoo Communion, but there have not been joint investigation, discernment and decisions on behalf of the Communion. This means that, even though in practice the member churches have acted independently, the collegial meetings could very well function as decision-making bodies on behalf of the Communion. What is required is a clarification both in principle and legally of the role that the ecclesiological understanding of the PCS gives the bishops as a united episcopal ministry and college with the respon-

¹¹¹ See the communiqués from the Primates' meetings, the Porvoo Church Leaders' Consultations, and the Porvoo Theological Conferences in Karttunen, Fagerli, and Nathaniel, *Towards Closer Unity*, p337ff.

sibility to lead and make personal, collegial, and communal decisions on the local, regional, and universal levels of the Church.¹¹²

Together is stronger than alone, also in the sense that a joint doctrinal commission of the Porvoo Communion considering many different philosophical, theological, and contextual perspectives would probably reach a wiser and more worked-through decision than a single, rather small church reflecting on its own – and even more so when the single church is put under pressure by public opinion and by the government to make the ‘right’ decision.¹¹³ The need for common reflection and decision-making is not only true in the case of single doctrinal questions, but also concerns whether the churches act in general as a communion or as a number of separate churches in their joint mission in Europe and beyond. As part of a communion, all Porvoo churches would be enriched by shared decision-making in integrity, and in relation to the national state and society.¹¹⁴

In the Porvoo debate the call for independence was obvious in the ELCD – an independence in relation to the Porvoo Communion, but not from the Danish national state. In practice, however, most Porvoo churches have acted in this way. In matters of politics, liturgy, and ethics, the churches have acted independently, not as one church communion with a united ministry of oversight. The more sensitive or controversial the question, the more independently the churches have acted,¹¹⁵ and sometimes even expressly stated their right to do so.¹¹⁶ This is, in a way, a paradox, because it is especially when the churches are put under pressure by national interests that they need each other, in order to be able to make balanced decisions with integrity.

Several of the Porvoo churches demonstrate a lack of independence in relation to their national governments. The problematic relationship between

¹¹² PCS §§20, 22-28, 42-45.

¹¹³ Doe notes that “when a church faces pressure from its host State(s) to adopt secular standards in its ecclesial life and practice, a statement of Christian law might provide support to that church and reinforce or underpin its position on a given matter.” Doe, *Christian Law*, p8.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Toy, ‘Is Porvoo Working?’, p4. Toy writes that “none of the churches involved sees itself as an isolated body able to make decisions on its own without affecting others.” Even though this might be true on a theoretical level, as shown through ecumenical engagement, the way the churches have acted reveals a different understanding in practice.

¹¹⁵ Cf. Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p129.

¹¹⁶ Wejryd, ‘Letter to the Porvoo Communion’. Archbishop Anders Wejryd of Uppsala wrote to the primates of the Porvoo Communion in March 2009: “Within the Porvoo Communion we are committed to keep one another informed about major issues that are going on within our churches. ... All our churches are self-governed. We cannot force decisions upon each other. However it is to me of utmost importance to keep you informed of what is going on and we are of course ready to inform you more if so wanted.” This ecclesiological understanding does not match the ecclesiology of the PCS and the Porvoo Communion, and has to be seen as a deviation from the most basic understanding of communion and mutual accountability. Archbishop Wejryd elaborated in his letter how the secular political development in Sweden had changed the situation for the CoS. While that description might be correct, it does not actually say anything about the CoS’s doctrinal discernment and why it was not conducted independently of the policy of the secular state. The archbishop’s letter was criticised by Hill and Hind, ‘Answer Letter to Archbishop Anders Wejryd of Uppsala’.

some of the Anglican and Lutheran churches and their respective national states was described in the Helsinki Report of 1983:

Anglicans and Lutherans therefore agree that the mission of the Church arises necessarily from its nature. They confess together that their Churches have often failed to be obedient to their God-given mission. In Europe, the fact that some of the Anglican and Lutheran Churches were, or are still, established and have the character of ‘folk churches’ has sometimes endangered their mission. These churches have often identified themselves with prevailing political structures and ideologies. But such abuses should not obscure the importance of the necessary relation between the Gospel and the culture of the society to which the Church is sent.¹¹⁷

The inability of the Porvoo Communion to act as one communion both internally and in relation to other churches and the national states stands in contrast to the expressed aim in the PCS – as, for example, in §6, which states: “Above all, we face a common challenge to engage in God’s mission to the people of our nations and continent”. The difficulties of the Porvoo Communion in acting in unity witnesses to the (so far) low level of implementation of the Porvoo churches and of their awareness of the PCS’s ecclesiology and concept of unity. The question is whether the close relationship of the churches with the nation-state is an obstacle to sacramental and corporal unity, and thus an obstacle to the realised catholicity and apostolicity of the Church. On the other hand, the churches, and the Porvoo Communion as a whole, have every possibility of elaborating the necessary means to implement the visible and corporate unity committed to in the PCS/PD. Besides common decision-making, one such instrument is church law.

16.2.4. Church law

Church law has been described as the missing link in ecumenism.¹¹⁸ This is notable, considering that, as early as 1974, the Faith & Order Commission emphasised the potential of a joint study of church law as an instrument of ecumenism; but no further action was taken to promote this.¹¹⁹ As I have described,¹²⁰ the 20th century ecumenical movement focused instead on the christological and pneumatological understanding of ecclesiology. While that development has included a critique of an exaggerated juridical and objectified notion of doctrine and ordained ministry, it should not be understood as meaning that the Church does not need any juridical regulations as

¹¹⁷ ALERC, ‘Helsinki’, p61, §51.

¹¹⁸ For a number of scholars who have stated this, see Doe, *Christian Law*, p9.

¹¹⁹ See *Ibid.*, p1f, 10. Doe refers to WCC, Faith & Order Commission, ‘The Ecumenical Movement and Church Law’, Document IV.8 (1974).

¹²⁰ See particularly Chapter 2 and 14.3.

instruments of unity and communion.¹²¹ Rather, the holistic and fiducial ecclesiology of the PCS and of the wider ecumenical movement, as described in this thesis, provides the impetus for a new and elaborated understanding of church law.¹²² While theology and ecclesiology seek understanding, church law seeks to formulate how the Church should function and act internally and in relation to the world. There is thus a dynamic relationship between ecclesiology and law, and law could be seen as applied ecclesiology.¹²³ Ecclesiology shapes law, and law implements ecclesiology. Church law has to be ruled by ecclesiology, not the other way round; but without juridical regulations the Church will not function as an ordered and structured community, and will not be able to carry out its mission and ministry.¹²⁴ Church law is thus an important instrument or bond of communion. In juridical perspective, ecclesiology is the primary stimulus for church law, while the primary function of church law is the action of the Church, and the primary character of church law is that it is often normative and thus uniting.¹²⁵ This is why church law is crucial for the realisation of the visible unity acknowledged in the PCS/PD.

In the implementation process that followed the approval of the PD in 1996, the importance of organisation and legally-formulated structures for the merging of the churches and the informal exchanges has not much been considered. While the PCS has established the ecclesiological basis for visible unity, the juridical and organisational consequences have so far not been fully drawn by the churches or by the Porvoo Communion. With the exception of minor (and important) changes in the laws of some Porvoo churches,¹²⁶ the PCS/PD has so far not significantly influenced the laws of the Porvoo churches and, apart from one conference for canon lawyers of the Porvoo Churches,¹²⁷ the issue of law has not been particularly discussed in the Porvoo Communion.¹²⁸ Consequently, the communion has not developed any common law or common juridical principles that are legally binding on

¹²¹ Cf. PCS §28.

¹²² This was the case in the aftermath of Vatican II and the development of the Roman Canon law of 1983, which took 24 years to develop and is a consequence of the documents of Vatican II; see Coriden, *An Introduction to Canon Law*, p35ff.

¹²³ E.g., Doe, *Christian Law*, p384.

¹²⁴ For a discussion of the relationship of theology and law, see Örsy, *Theology and Canon Law*, p158ff.

¹²⁵ PCS §28 (see Chapter 16.2 for the whole paragraph); see also PCS Foreword §11; Doe, 'The Ecumenical Value of Comparative Church Law', p1.

¹²⁶ The changes concern the legal exceptional possibility (*causu necessitas*) for the dean to ordain in the absence of the bishop in the ELCF (1996) and in the CoN (2006) (see Chapter 5.6.4), and the minor influence of the PCS on the CoS's CO 2000 (see Chapter 16.2 above).

¹²⁷ Meeting of the Church Lawyers of the Porvoo Communion, 'Commentary on the Porvoo Declaration', p384.

¹²⁸ In 1995 the *Nordic Ecumenical Council* organised a conference on ecclesiology and church law for theologians and church lawyers of the Nordic churches. The focus was primarily on the implications of the PCS for State law, rather than on the law of the churches. See Nordic Ecumenical Council, *Kyrkosyn*.

the communion as a whole. This means that there is a tension in the Porvoo Communion between the legal systems of the various church provinces.¹²⁹ The issue of different and competing legal systems relates to the issue of the possible independence of the Porvoo churches, or whether the Porvoo churches will be transformed into the confessed (Porvoo) communion. That tension is already present in PD §58 *b(v)*, which states that the PCS shall be implemented in the Porvoo churches in accordance with the laws “which may from time to time be in force”.¹³⁰ This paragraph must, however, be understood in the perspective of the ecclesiology of the PCS and its emphasis that the implementation of the ecclesiology has legal consequences, and needs to be “embodied in the law and regulations of the Church”.¹³¹ Held together, the formulation in PD §58 *b(v)* indicates that the legal systems of the Porvoo church provinces are not the last word, but should be understood as part of the process of implementing the acknowledged communion, which goes beyond what was previously understood as Anglicanism or Lutheranism.¹³² Accordingly, the Porvoo Communion and its church provinces need to address the issue of law in an organised and systematic way in order to realise its ecclesiology, described in this thesis, and in order to clarify the legal competence of each level of the Church: local, regional, and universal (according to the principle of subsidiarity).

While the Porvoo Communion does not yet have formal, legalised structures beyond those of the individual church provinces, the developed and ongoing thinking in the Anglican Communion¹³³ and in the Orthodox and RC churches,¹³⁴ as well as in political science and law, indicates that the Porvoo Communion needs to develop its thinking about the implementation of its ecclesiology. Since 2001 the Anglican Communion has systematically explored whether there are common principles of law that are shared by its member churches, as a contribution to and a development of Anglican communion. The Anglican *ius commune* project (as it is called) is related to, but separate from, the adoption of an *Anglican Covenant*.¹³⁵ In both cases, law is seen as an instrument for communion; “Canon Law should reflect and promote global Communion”.¹³⁶ It may be productive for the Porvoo Communion to consider and apply the Anglican procedure of *ius commune* (i.e., com-

¹²⁹ Cf. PCS/PD §58 *b(v)*.

¹³⁰ PCS/PD §58 *b(v)*.

¹³¹ PCS §28.

¹³² PCS §22; Cf. Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p127. Tanner notes that the PCS/PD implies a unity beyond what we earlier understood as ‘Anglicanism’ and ‘Lutheranism’.

¹³³ Anglican Consultative Council, *The Principles of Canon Law*.

¹³⁴ For a comparison of the Anglican ‘common principles of canon law’ and RC, Orthodox and other churches’ legal traditions, see Doe, ‘The Contribution of Common Principles’, p105ff.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, p97, 108.

¹³⁶ The Primates of the Anglican Communion in 2007. Quoted from *Ibid.*, p108.

parative church law) and the *Anglican Covenant* to its own development, in order to implement its ecclesiology and episcopal collegiality of one united ministry.

Another relevant, although very different, context in comparison is the European Union. It is worth noting that, while the European Union is a confederation of nation states cooperating in a union (although there are political forces working both for deeper integration and for disintegration), the ecclesiology of the Porvoo Communion, as the word ‘communion’ signifies, is in fact much more demanding as a sacramental communion. This is a paradox: while the European Union as a confederation of nation states has developed institutional instruments, a common law, and a legal system, the Porvoo Communion as a sacramental communion has not developed those instruments that are necessary for common decision-making and for its joint mission and ministry in Europe. In the European Union there is an ongoing and extended discussion about its development and about how the legislation of the union should both be normative and include the member states; and whether the most effective way to deepen the integration of the union is mandatory legislation (‘hard law’) or regulations that are more voluntary but normative in character (‘soft law’).¹³⁷ In comparison, the Porvoo Communion has so far only established informal instruments, and there seems to be little discussion about how effective such informal coordination is for the implementation of its ecclesiology and the life of the Porvoo Communion. The Porvoo Communion needs to establish those instruments that serve sacramental communion and the establishment of visible unity in order to become what it confesses itself to be. This is important, not only in order to implement the PCS, but also to develop the church law thinking as such and to facilitate the effectiveness of the Church’s ministry and mission in relation to the world. In that process, church law can play a vital role in the functioning of the Church’s internal life and her relation to other churches, to secular states, and to other religions.¹³⁸

Due to the relation of church law to ecclesiology, it is possible to discern basic principles for the law of the Porvoo Communion. The juridical principles drawn from the PCS’s ecclesiology need to be implemented on the local, regional, and universal levels of the Communion’s life,¹³⁹ although ‘universal’ at this stage has to be understood as provisional and – so far – only concerned with the existing Porvoo Communion.¹⁴⁰ In order to do so, it is important for the theologians and canon lawyers of the Porvoo Communion, on the one hand, to draw out the legal implications of the Porvoo ecclesiology; and, on the other hand, to harmonise the various legal systems of the

¹³⁷ Cf. e.g. Mörrth, ‘Den öppna samordningseffekten som demokratiproblem’, p93.

¹³⁸ Doe, *Christian Law*, p386.

¹³⁹ PCS §45.

¹⁴⁰ PCS/PD §§60-61.

particular church provinces with the ecclesiology of the PCS. The united ministry that is exercised personally, collegially, and communally at the local, regional, and universal levels requires the establishing of the appropriate structure for the oversight exercised by this united ministry, and formalised in legal regulations that are received and made law in the Porvoo churches. In such a process of harmonising the legal systems of the provinces of the Porvoo Communion (*ius commune*), a comparative study of church law is important in order to detect similarities and differences.

In an extended comparative study of the law of ten different world-wide church families, the Anglican Church lawyer Norman Doe has noted remarkable similarities from which it is possible to draw some common juridical principles. According to Doe, the principles seem to rest on three fundamental maxims: “law is the servant of the church; laws should reflect faith in the revealed will of God; and dogmas divide but laws link Christians in common action”.¹⁴¹ Given that Doe’s study goes far beyond the Porvoo churches, the results of his research are also important for the Porvoo Communion and the implementation of its ecclesiology. While the remarkable similarity of the laws studied by Doe concerned churches with divergent understandings of ecclesiology and doctrine, the Porvoo churches have achieved a “substantial unity” of doctrine and ecclesiology,¹⁴² which means that a comparative study of the churches’ juridical regulations would not only find similarities, but also achieve communality and joint juridical principles and law.

The exact shape of such joint church law has to be left open, but it is likely that it would consist of a combination of joint juridical regulations for the entire Porvoo Communion, and common principles for the church law of the church provinces of the communion, as well as certain regulations applied only to particular churches and in accordance with the common juridical principles of the Porvoo Communion. Such elaboration of the juridical regulations as an application of the ecclesiology of the PCS on the local, regional, and universal level of the Church, and in accordance with the principle of *subsidiarity*, needs to be addressed by the whole communion, and worked out step by step in order to improve the functionality of the instruments of communion as a *sacramentum mundi* and the common proclamation of the Gospel in the world.

Church law also relates to other instruments that could be used to promote communion, such as the media, identity, and liturgy.

¹⁴¹ Doe, *Christian Law*, p384.

¹⁴² PCS §§33, 55; PCS Foreword §9; PCS §§14ff (ecclesiology); PCS §§29ff (on faith).

16.2.5. The media and communication

An important area for the Porvoo Communion to discuss and develop in order to facilitate the implementation of visible unity is communication and the use of the media. This issue concerns both the decision-making bodies of the Porvoo Communion as a whole, and the Porvoo church provinces' use of the media to communicate and implement the ecclesiology, to build an awareness of the identity of the Porvoo Communion as a Church communion of communions. Although there are exceptions such as *Reseptio* (published by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) and the *Unity Digest* (published by the CoE's *Council of Christian Unity*), the use of the media and the internet is generally underdeveloped. The various newspapers of the Porvoo Churches do not give priority to articles about the Porvoo Communion.¹⁴³ A factor contributing to the low interest from the media may be the unclear mandate of the instruments of the Porvoo Communion. This ambiguity in the practical work of the instruments of the Porvoo Communion does not serve the interests of the media. Another related problem is the underdeveloped use of the Porvoo Communion home page, which – in the words of one journalist – “gives a rather sleepy impression”,¹⁴⁴ and could be considerably improved.¹⁴⁵ This deficiency in the communication of the Porvoo Communion can be seen as a consequence of the underdeveloped organisation and the lack of a common secretariat of the collegial and conciliar structures of the communion. However, the instruments of the Porvoo Communion have every potential to develop its organisation and its use of the media in a conscious way, in order to implement visible unity and develop the mission and ministry of a united Church in Europe.

16.2.6. The Evangelic Catholic Church

In order to implement the Porvoo Communion, there must be a common consciousness among the people of those churches that they belong to a communion, and that, ecclesiologically-speaking, this means a communal church and not only a mere confederation of independent churches.¹⁴⁶ Related to this common consciousness is the need for a better name than ‘Porvoo Communion’. It might be seen as a superficial issue, but for the sake of ecclesiological consciousness and identity, and as a way to overcome confessionalism, the question of the name of the communion established through

¹⁴³ In my research in libraries in Uppsala, Geneva, Rome and London, as is the case in the extensive Danish material, I have seen that the ecclesiology of the PCS is discussed in many ecumenical journals, particular during the period 1993-1996. The Porvoo Communion is, however, not particularly discussed in the papers of the Porvoo churches, and, when it is, in a rather ecclesiologically un-developed way.

¹⁴⁴ Morén, ‘Ärkebiskopar diskuterar flyktingsituationen’.

¹⁴⁵ www.porvoocommunion.org.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Fuchs, *Koinonia and the Quest for an Ecumenical Ecclesiology*, p59f, 68f.

the PD is not superficial. This is even more urgent, since the name ‘Porvoo Communion’, which is not found in the PCS itself, is problematic. In the history of the ecumenical movement, dialogue documents have often been named after the town in which the text of the documents was finally agreed. That was also the case with the PCS.¹⁴⁷ However, the PCS is, as noted at the beginning of this chapter, not only a theoretical dialogue text: it aims to establish the visible and corporate unity of a number of churches beyond their previous confessional identities. It might be understandable, therefore, that the text was named the *Porvoo Common Statement*; but the church communion thus established needs to find a better name – one that better mirrors its ecclesiological identity. No person baptised within the Porvoo Communion would answer the question, “What Church do you belong to?” with “The Porvoo Communion!”. Instead, the name of the communion needs to reflect what the Communion understands itself to be – i.e., a communal church that confesses herself to be the Church – one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.¹⁴⁸

The purpose of the PCS was to overcome confessionalism through a deeper understanding, embracing and integrating earlier divided churches and their confessional concepts. To do so the PCS sketches a portrait of the Church that is holistic and fiducial, rather than based on certain fundamentals or essentials, aiming at the “fullness which God desires for his people”.¹⁴⁹ The stress on the Church’s ‘fullness’ is another way of describing the Church as catholic. The approach was described by Michael Root as a way for the Anglican and Lutheran Porvoo Churches to “develop an evangelical and catholic vision of the faith that each can claim as their own and together offer ecumenically to others?”.¹⁵⁰ As we have seen, the catholicity of the Church is a vital aspect of how the PCS understands the Church to be apostolic. The Church as catholic has been extensively reflected upon by the ecumenical movement.

The early documents of Faith & Order did not, however, make extensive use of the term ‘catholic’, although the notion was there.¹⁵¹ The preparatory texts for the Fourth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Uppsala in 1968 were more at ease with the term, and established that it is the task of the ecumenical movement to regain the original meaning of ‘catholic’ and

¹⁴⁷ PCS Foreword §8.

¹⁴⁸ PCS §§7, 32 g, 34, 43, 48, 55, 58 *a(i)*.

¹⁴⁹ PCS §53.

¹⁵⁰ Chapter 6.1; Root, ‘Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Their Broader Ecumenical Significance’, p32. Cf. also PCS §§60-61.

¹⁵¹ The first World Conference of Faith & Order in Lausanne in 1927 did not make use of the word ‘catholic’ because it was thought to be too controversial and identified with a particular denomination. Instead the conference referred to the Church as God’s family, the body of Christ, and the temple of God. The Second World Conference of Faith & Order at Edinburgh in 1937 referred to a Holy Catholic Church and a common faith. See Fuerth, *The Concept of Catholicity in the Documents of the World Council of Churches, 1948-1968*, p38ff; Berggren, *Catholicity Challenging Ethnicity*, p42f.

‘catholicity’ beyond confessionalism.¹⁵² As a result, one section of the Assembly report deals exclusively with *The Holy Spirit and the Catholicity of the Church*, and stated that “the Church is catholic, and should be catholic, in all her elements and in all aspects of her life, and especially in her worship”, and that “catholicity is a gift of the Spirit, but it is also a task, a call and engagement”.¹⁵³ In 2007 the Report of the Ninth Assembly of the World Council of Churches at Porto Alegre gave this description:

The *catholicity* of the Church expresses the fullness, integrity and totality of its life in Christ through the Holy Spirit in all times and places. ... Each church is the Church catholic, but not the whole of it. Each church fulfills its catholicity when it is in communion with the other churches. We affirm that the catholicity of the Church is expressed most visibly in sharing holy communion and in a mutually recognized and reconciled ministry.”¹⁵⁴

This understanding of ‘catholicity’ – as concerning the whole life of the Church, as both a gift and a task, and realised through a reconciled ministry – corresponds well with the fiducial ecclesiology described in the PCS, and challenges all churches to deepen themselves according to God’s desire for their fullness beyond confessionalism.¹⁵⁵ The Porvoo Communion confesses itself to be part of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Jesus Christ, and as standing in continuity with the Church of the patristic and medieval periods, both directly and through the insights of the Reformation period.¹⁵⁶ Given this ecclesiological understanding of the Porvoo Communion, a possible and suitable name for the greater church established through the Porvoo Communion might be the *Evangelic Catholic Church*¹⁵⁷ – confessing both its *catholic* identity and its *evangelic* Reformation heritage, as stated in PCS §7.¹⁵⁸ The name *Evangelic Catholic Church* would mean that the church is called what she understands herself to be, and answers the ecumenical call to regain the original meaning of ‘catholic’ and ‘catholicity’.

¹⁵² The preparatory text was worked out in Bristol by the Faith & Order Commission in 1967; see Thunberg, *Förändring och förnyelse*, p11, 22.

¹⁵³ WCC, *The Uppsala Report 1968*, p13.

¹⁵⁴ WCC, *God in Your Grace...*, p257.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. PCS §§22, 54; Groupe des Dombes, ‘For the Conversion of the Churches (1991)’, p149ff.

¹⁵⁶ PCS §7.

¹⁵⁷ One of the church provinces of the Porvoo Communion already includes *Evangelic and Catholic* in her name – i.e., the *Lusitanian Catholic Apostolic Evangelical Church*.

¹⁵⁸ I understand the concept in this sense, although I am aware that the concept has been used with various meanings both historically and today; see Brodd, *Evangelisk katolicitet*, p25ff; Weigel, *Evangelical Catholicism: Deep Reform in the 21st-Century Church*. Several authors before me have used the concept for the Anglican-Lutheran churches; see Lemaître, *Anglicans et luthériens en Europe*, p276; Root, ‘Anglican-Lutheran Relations: Their Broader Ecumenical Significance’, p31.

The name would further reflect the Porvoo churches' historical understanding of themselves before the age of confessionalism in the 19th century.¹⁵⁹

The original Anglican search for intercommunion with the CoS was described as a search for catholic intercommunion.¹⁶⁰ The Porvoo churches confess themselves to be catholic, and recognise each other to be so. The official text of the PCS (that is, the English text) also uses 'catholic'.¹⁶¹ It is true that the Nordic churches do not use the Latin term *catholicam* in the creed, but follow a medieval translation into the vernacular (as does, for example, the RCC in Poland).¹⁶² The use of the vernacular was not, and is not, a rejection of the content of *catholicam*: the Nordic churches followed a pre-Reformation German tradition,¹⁶³ while the Anglo-Saxon churches preserved *catholicam* in using the word 'catholic'. The change of the name could be further enhanced if the Nordic churches stopped using the vernacular – *allmännelig* – and instead adopted the more Latin-sounding *katolsk*.¹⁶⁴ Such a change is justified in itself. In a commentary on the Uppsala Report, the Swedish theologian Per-Erik Person noted that *allmännelig* is semantically problematic and a poor translation of *catholicam*, while *katolsk* is clearer and more accurate; and so it would be desirable for the CoS [as well as all the Nordic-Baltic churches] to change the “translation of the misleading ‘allmännelig’ into the initially challenging, but correct, ‘katolsk’”.¹⁶⁵ That change, as well as the adoption of the name *Evangelic Catholic Church*, would mean a clearer confession, not only of the communion with the other Porvoo church provinces, but also of the historicity, inclusiveness, and universality of the Church as described in the PCS, in other ecumenical documents, and in this thesis.

The historical relevance of the term is also clear. I have described how Emperor Karl V responded to the dividing struggles of the one western catholic church by establishing a temporary pause, which became permanent through the development of confessional identities.¹⁶⁶ An important part of this evolution of confessional identities, and later of independent churches, was the emergence of various confessional names. However, that process was much slower than we might think today. The word 'catholic' was not used as a denominational label; and no fewer than three times it is stated in

¹⁵⁹ Cf. e.g. Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p178. “On a global scale, today the term ‘catholic’ has lost its function for denominational demarcation and also its function as deterrent. Today we can assume on all sides a holistic understanding of catholicity. With this, the continued existence of separated churches has become an even more pressing issue.”

¹⁶⁰ Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*, p142.

¹⁶¹ PCS §§7, 32g, 34, 43, 48, 58.

¹⁶² The Polish RCC does not use *katolicki* but the Polish word *powszechny*. The same is the case in Russian and Ukrainian (*Вселенську Церкву*).

¹⁶³ Brodd, ‘Evangelisk katolicitet I’, p134, note 8.

¹⁶⁴ *Allmännelig* is Swedish, but the other Nordic churches use their equivalents. In Finnish it is *yhteinen*, not *katolinen*.

¹⁶⁵ Persson, ‘Den Helige Ande och kyrkans katolicitet’, p18ff, quotation from p20.

¹⁶⁶ Chapter 9.2.

the CA that the faith described is nothing other than the true catholic faith.¹⁶⁷ In fact, the first time the Roman party was referred to as ‘catholic’ in distinguishing it from other factions was in the Peace of Westphalia of 1648.¹⁶⁸ The reference was seriously criticised by Evangelic theologians because they regarded themselves to be the true catholic church. Likewise, the Roman Church denied other parties the right to define themselves as ‘evangelic’. In the treaty of the Peace of Westphalia, the term ‘roman-catholic’ was introduced as a term in political law, but it was regarded as ecclesiologically unacceptable by the Evangelic theologians, since they regarded themselves as not only *a* but *the* catholic church.¹⁶⁹

When the mid-17th century Swedish bishop Johannes Matthiae generously referred to the Roman church as ‘Roman Catholic’, he was heavily criticised by Swedish theologians and bishops, since he had defined the church of Rome as ‘catholic’ and not as *religio papistica*, or *ecclesia romana*, or *ecclesia pontifica*. For his ecumenical attitude Bishop Matthiae was accused of syncretism, since a false religion such as the papist church could not be ‘catholic’.¹⁷⁰ Bishop Matthiae also used ‘catholic’ in reference to his own church: in 1656 he published a catechesis of the evangelic faith named *Summa of the true salyific catholic Christian teaching*.¹⁷¹ The matter changed slowly during the 18th and 19th centuries.¹⁷² As noted, the 19th century was important for the development of confessionalism and the birth of different -isms that mutually excluded each other,¹⁷³ and ‘Catholic’ became increasingly a denominational label in opposition to ‘Lutheran’ or ‘Anglican’.¹⁷⁴ Despite that, both of the latter traditions confess themselves as ‘catholic’. A contributing factor to this increasing polarisation, at least in the Nordic countries, was the translation of *catholicam* into the vernacular. Similarly, in the 17th century the CoE first began to refer to itself as ‘Anglican’;¹⁷⁵ and the post-Reformation church in Sweden has normally referred to herself as Evangelic (and catholic),¹⁷⁶ while ‘Lutheran’ has not often been used in her official texts. The first time that the CoS referred to herself as ‘Evangelic-Lutheran’ in an official document was in fact as late as in 1982, in the law of

¹⁶⁷ Conclusion of CA 1-21; Foreword to CA 22-28; Conclusion of CA.

¹⁶⁸ Göransson, *Den Europeiska Konfessionspolitikens Upplösning 1654-1660*, p148ff.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p148ff; Brodd, ‘Evangelisk katolicitet I’, p134.

¹⁷⁰ Göransson, *Den Europeiska Konfessionspolitikens Upplösning 1654-1660*, p148ff.

¹⁷¹ In Swedish, *Summa öfver then reena saliggörande catholiska christeliga läran*.

¹⁷² During a journey in Germany in 1689 the distinguished Swedish scientist Urban Hjärne (1641-1724) was asked if he was a ‘catholic’ or not. He answered that he was an evangelic catholic. This witnesses to a tendency to admit that the papist too was regarded as catholic. Otherwise ‘evangelic’ would have been redundant. Arvastson, ‘Urban Hjärnes tyskländsresa 1689’, p142.

¹⁷³ Chapter 10.1; Brodd, ‘Evangelisk katolicitet I’, p135.

¹⁷⁴ Kasper, *The Catholic Church*, p176ff.

¹⁷⁵ Avis, ‘What Is “Anglicanism”?’ p461.

¹⁷⁶ Brodd, ‘Evangelisk katolicitet I’, p133ff.

the national state.¹⁷⁷ Similarly, it is only in English that the name of the ELCD includes ‘Lutheran’, while that church refers to herself in Danish as *Den Danske Folkekirken* (the Danish Folk Church).¹⁷⁸ Overall, this process witnesses to a period of confessional consolidation, during which the four major Reformation traditions developed into independent churches.

This development of confessional identity indicates, first, that the issue of the name of a church is important for the identity of that particular church, because concepts, terms, and labels tend to control the human mind, structuring the perceived/imaginary reality and our preconceptions.¹⁷⁹ That is no less the case with confessionalist labels that often tend to define one denomination in contrast to another. Second, it indicates that, when it is stated in PCS §22 that unity is found beyond the earlier Anglican and Lutheran denominations, it not only requires a challenging deepening of the churches’ identity, due to the ecumenical imperative: it is also a realisation of the very identity of the churches concerned beyond a confessionalist national identity, that now may be corrected through the realisation of the visible and corporate unity of the *Evangelic Catholic Church*.¹⁸⁰ That church, as the word *Evangelic* indicates, is still a provisional church – as established in PCS/PD §60, which states that the Porvoo churches do not regard their “move to closer communion as an end in itself, but as part of the pursuit of a wider unity”.

The name *Evangelic Catholic Church* has also another advantage: it does not refer to a geographical location, but to what the church understands herself to be. (This does not contradict the fact that the church provinces are local and located in a particular geographical area.) This is important in relation to the entire Anglican Communion and to the LWF. In the Porvoo debate, the PCS was criticised because it includes some Anglican churches and some Lutheran churches; yet those churches themselves are not in communion with all Anglican and all Lutheran churches respectively. The Evangelic Catholic Church presently exists in Northern Europe and the Iberian Peninsula, but it could also include the entire Anglican Communion and many Lutheran churches.¹⁸¹ The Evangelic Catholic Church could therefore be a

¹⁷⁷ On the Swedish law concerning the Church of Sweden (1982:942), see Eckerdal, Persson, and Gerhardsson, *Vad står Svenska kyrkan för?*, p10ff. See also Stolt, *Svenska biskopsvigningar*, p108. Stolt notes that it was only in the mid-19th century that the CoS was referred to as ‘Evangelic-Lutheran’ by the pietistic movements. This language was criticised by Bishop Carl Adolph Agardh of Karlstad, who emphasised that the CoS does not call itself ‘Lutheran’ and that its teaching should not be referred to as ‘Evangelic-Lutheran’ but as the ‘true Evangelic teaching’, as in the Swedish constitutional law of 1809 – and as was also the case in the Provincial Council of Uppsala of 1593.

¹⁷⁸ That is also the case with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Iceland, which refers to herself in Icelandic as *Þjódkirkja Íslands*, i.e. the Church of Iceland.

¹⁷⁹ Brodd, ‘Evangelisk katolicitet I’, p133.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. PCS §§22, 54; Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p127.

¹⁸¹ For example, the Polish Lutheran Church and the German-speaking Lutheran diaspora in the Russian Federation, both of which are episcopally ordered in succession. The same is true for a number of African Lutheran churches.

broader community than the Anglican Communion or the Nordic-Baltic Lutheran churches,¹⁸² as a church communion going beyond the former Anglicanism and Lutheranism.¹⁸³ In accordance with PCS §60-61, and in relation to other churches, the Evangelic Catholic Church could include also the Old Catholic Church, which presently is in communion with both the CoE (1932) and the CoS (2016), but not with the whole Porvoo Communion. The same applies to the Philippine Independent Church, which is in communion with the Anglican Communion (1961), the Old Catholic Church (1965), and the CoS (1995). For such development and implementation of the PCS and the declared communions with other Lutheran and Anglican churches and with the Old Catholic and Philippine Independent churches to take place, the necessary structures and legal regulations need to be developed in accordance with the common ecclesiology.¹⁸⁴

16.2.7. The liturgy of the Evangelic Catholic Church

About liturgy, the PCS says that the Porvoo churches “share in the liturgical heritage of Western Christianity”,¹⁸⁵ which “is increasingly recognized both as an essential bond between our churches and as a contribution to the wider ecumenical movement”,¹⁸⁶ and that the Porvoo churches “are influenced by a common liturgical renewal”.¹⁸⁷ According to the PCS, the shape of the liturgy is essential for the unity of the Church and as a bond of communion.¹⁸⁸ Given this role of liturgy in the PCS, it would be a logical consequence that the shape of the liturgy is used to express – and to deepen – the visible unity of the Evangelic Catholic Church. However, in the Porvoo process there has been no discussion about developing the common liturgical tradition of the church provinces or a joint liturgy. This is surprising, given the importance that liturgy is accorded in the PCS as an instrument for unity and as a bond of communion. Despite this important role of liturgy as a bond of communion, most of the church provinces have developed and approved new liturgical books autonomously, without reference to the communion (although there are also cross-fertilisations in those processes).¹⁸⁹ Given the ecclesiolo-

¹⁸² Although the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Latvia is not part of the Porvoo Communion.

¹⁸³ PCS §§22, 54; Tanner, ‘The Concept of Unity in the PCS’, p127.

¹⁸⁴ A forerunner to such a study is found in Anglican Consultative Council, *The Principles of Canon Law*, which not only includes the Anglican Church provinces but also the Old Catholic Churches.

¹⁸⁵ PCS §7.

¹⁸⁶ PCS §7.

¹⁸⁷ PCS §32e.

¹⁸⁸ The importance of liturgy and the similarities between the Anglican and Lutheran traditions had already been noted in ALIC, ‘Pullach’, p37, §§92-95.

¹⁸⁹ This is true for most of the Porvoo churches: the ELCF approved new eucharistic rites in 2000; the CoN in 2011; the CoE in 2000, the CoI in 2004, and the CoW in 2004; the CoS is presently discussing new liturgical rites; the bishops of the ELCD recently asked if it was not time to revise the church’s liturgical rites from 1992; the rites are being revised in the diocese

gy of the PCS and its understanding of unity and diversity, it is reasonable to have some liturgical diversity among the church provinces.¹⁹⁰ Such diversity could be formalised in a common liturgical order and still mirror a common understanding of the liturgy of the Church; but diversity might also bring about contradictions and a lack of unity. Seeing the liturgy as a bond of communion, there are at least three different ways in which the Communion could work to elaborate a common liturgical tradition and to deepen its unity as a church communion:

1. The Evangelic Catholic Church could formulate and approve one missal for all church provinces. That would mean that the liturgy is celebrated in the same way everywhere, in the vernacular – although such a missal could be open to a range of traditions concerning hymns and liturgical music.
2. A less-regulated possibility could be commonly-approved liturgical principles that are applied individually in the various church provinces, taking each liturgical history, tradition, and language into account.
3. An intermediate alternative could be that a joint missal is formulated for the whole Evangelic Catholic Church, but with the option for individual church provinces to approve some liturgical orders or regulations in accordance with the liturgical heritage of the particular province, and in accordance with the liturgical principles of the whole Church.

The third of these alternatives would have the advantage that it is an expression of both unity and legitimate diversity in accordance with the traditions of the regional church provinces. A further advantage of a liturgical harmonisation would be that the exchange of laity and clergy would be made much easier, which would further deepen the unity of the (Porvoo) communion of the Evangelic Catholic Church.

16.3. Final remark

The establishment of the Porvoo Communion through the PCS has been regarded by many as an ecumenical breakthrough. The communion has brought many blessings to the life of the church communion, and contributed to a deeper unity, made concrete through joint ordinations, a common sacramental life, exchanges, the sharing of resources, educational programmes, and link parishes and dioceses. Not least, the realised unity of those earlier

of the Faroe Islands; the ELCI, the EELC, and the ELCLith are presently revising their rites. Although there have been various conferences dealing with liturgy on an informal level, there has been no overlapping in this work, no joint consultations, and no discussion about a joint liturgical commission. See Raun Iversen, *Rites of Ordination and Commitment*, Edgards, 'Recensionsartikel', p1.

¹⁹⁰ See PCS §23.

independent national churches has meant that about 45 million Christians, primarily in Northern Europe, are in the church at home and also when they are abroad; and that means a deepening of the catholic and apostolic dimensions of the Church. Still, as this final chapter has described, the ecclesiology of the PCS is more radical than the Porvoo churches have so far managed to embrace and implement in their churches and in the communion as a whole. In this perspective, it might be asked what the future holds for the Porvoo Communion as the Evangelic Catholic Church. While the answer will inevitably be speculative, it might at least – based on the experience of church history – be concluded that the course of history normally depends on how individuals answer the call of Jesus Christ to be one Church and to implement concretely the approved ecclesiology and unity. Those who have the greatest potential and capacity to do so are also those on whom the PCS primarily focuses – the bishops – and to whom it gives the authority and commission to oversee and lead the Church and its continuing deepening personally, collegially, and communally (expressing the whole Church gathering around their bishop/bishops). It is important for the Porvoo churches and the communion as a whole to ask – in the words of Bishop John Hind – not only, “‘What is necessary for eucharistic communion?’”, but also ‘What follows from eucharistic communion’”,¹⁹¹ and a united episcopal college?

If we learn from church history, it was the personal initiative of the archbishops of Uppsala and Canterbury that initiated the Porvoo process. Likewise, it was the personal initiative of Archbishop Nathan Söderblom to gather representatives from the churches at the World Conference of Life and Work in Stockholm in 1925, which became an important impulse for the establishing of the WCC. In the same way, it was the personal initiative of Archbishop Söderblom to gather, on the one hand, the bishops of the CoS, and, on the other hand, the bishops of all of the Nordic Evangelic Churches, for bishops’ conferences – two episcopal institutions that were later formalised and still exist today. The future of the implementation of the PCS and the realisation of the *Evangelic Catholic Church* depends on those persons who are willing to see the same vision as the Porvoo delegates once did, and to act accordingly for the Church – one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

¹⁹¹ Hind, ‘Anmerkungen zu “Porvoo”’, p28.

Appendix

(Some of) the first shared ordinations of bishops between the Porvoo churches¹

Below I have listed some of the first shared ordinations between the Porvoo churches before and since the approval of the PD. These ordinations mirror a growing communion between the Nordic-Baltic-Anglican churches, and show how consciously the east Nordic-Baltic churches acted in order to secure these churches as episcopal churches in succession in times of difficulties. The list also demonstrates that, on some occasions, joint ordinations were conducted between the east Nordic and west Nordic churches, as well as between the west Nordic churches and the CoE, before the PD was signed. For example, a Swedish bishop assisted in the ordination of a Norwegian bishop as early as 1990, and a Danish bishop took part in the ordination of an Anglican bishop in 1995.

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| 1920 | At the invitation of Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Uppsala, two Anglican bishops – Hensley Henson of Durham and Theodore Woods of Peterborough – participated in the episcopal ordinations of Viktor Rundgren (Visby) and Einar Billing (Västerås) in the cathedral of Uppsala on 19 September. ² |
| 1921 | Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Uppsala ordained Jakob Kukk Bishop of Tallin/Estonia. ³ |
| 1922 | Archbishop Nathan Söderblom of Uppsala ordained Bishop Karlis Irbe of Latvia and gave him the title Archbishop. At the same visit in Latvia he also ordained a bishop for the German speaking population in Latvia. ⁴ |
| 1927 | On 1 November, a Swedish bishop, Ernst Lönegren, Bishop of Härnösand, participated for the first time in an ordination |

¹ For a list of Swedish bishops who conducted ordinations in the Finnish and Baltic churches, and of Old Catholic bishops who participated in the ordinations of Anglican bishops who later participated in the ordinations of Swedish bishops between 1932 and 1957, see Stolt, *Svenska biskopsvigningar*, p138ff, 192ff.

² Söderblom, 'Dokument till fråga om nattvardsgemenskap med Englands kyrka', p364; Lyttkens, *The Growth of Swedish-Anglican Intercommunion*, p248f; Furberg, 'Lambeth och Uppsala', p180.

³ Österlin, *Churches of Northern Europe in Profile*, p249f.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p250f.

- of an Anglican bishop. Three bishops were ordained in Canterbury Cathedral. They were two missionary bishops and one suffragan: Georg Alexander Chambers (Central Tanganyika), Gordon John Walsh (Hokkaido), and John Victor MacMillan (Suffragan Bishop of Dover).⁵
- 1934 Archbishop Erling Eidem of Uppsala assisted when Aleksii Lehtonen was ordained bishop of Tampere.⁶
- 1951 The first Anglican participation in a Finnish ordination of a bishop.⁷
- 1964 Archbishop Gunnar Hultgren of Uppsala ordained Johannes Oskar Lauri Archbishop for the Estonian exile church. Bishop Helge Ljungberg of Stockholm and Bishop Sven Danell of Skara also participate in the ordination.⁸
- 1968 The Finnish Archbishop of Turku/Åbo, Martti Simojoki, ordained Alfred Tooming Archbishop of Tallinn on 9 June.⁹
- 1969 The Swedish Bishop Sven Danell of Skara ordained Janis Matulis Archbishop of Riga.¹⁰
- 1976 The Estonian Archbishop Alfred Tooming of Tallinn ordained Jonas Kalvanas Bishop of Lithuania.¹¹
- 1989 The Archbishop of Uppsala, Bertil Werkström, ordained the Archbishop of Riga in Latvia, assisted by the Anglican Bishop John Satterthwaite of Gibraltar.¹²
- 1990 The Swedish Bishop of Luleå (CoS), Gunnar Weman (later Archbishop of Uppsala), assisted when Ola Steinholt was ordained Bishop of Tromsø in the CoN – before the CoN had approved the PD. At the time there was a long-established level of cooperation between the Swedish and Norwegian dioceses in the northern parts of the two countries.¹³
- 1995 The Danish Bishop Kjeld Holm of Aarhus assisted in October in the ordination of Kenneth Stevenson in Southwark Cathedral¹⁴ – before the ELCD had approved the PD.
- 1996 Bishop Andreas Aarflot, Bishop of Oslo and a Porvoo delegate, took part when Christopher Hill was ordained Bishop of

⁵ Wikmark, *Ernst Lönegren*, p248f.; Hill, 'Existing Agreements', p54.

⁶ Österlin, *Svenska kyrkan i profil*, p259.

⁷ Hill, 'Existing Agreements', p56.

⁸ Aunver, 'Peapiiskop Johannes Oskar Lauri ametisse õnnistamine', p4.

⁹ Pädam, 'Estonia', p113.

¹⁰ Muziks, 'Latvia', p118.

¹¹ Putce, 'Lithuania', p123.

¹² Hill, 'Existing Agreements', p56. Bishop Harlin was present on that occasion, but before he himself had been ordained bishop. Reported at the research seminar in ecclesiology at the University of Uppsala, 13-10-2015.

¹³ Weman, 'Letter to the Author'.

¹⁴ Tustin, 'Links with the Church of Denmark', p2, §5; Details given by Bishop David Tustin in Wrawby on 18-05-2015. Tustin based his information on his diary from 1995.

- Stafford in St Paul's Cathedral on 7 March. The assistant Bishop of Uppsala and a Porvoo delegate, Tord Harlin, also took part in the ordination.¹⁵
- 1997 Bishop Skúlason of Reykjavik assisted when Frank Weston was ordained Suffragan Bishop of Knaresborough in York Cathedral.¹⁶
- 1997 In December 1997 an Anglican bishop participated when Karl Sigurbjörnsson was ordained Bishop of Reykjavík.¹⁷

In 1951, when representatives of the churches of Denmark, Norway, Iceland, and England met for dialogue, leading to the Oslo report in 1952, the Danish theologian Regin Prenter noted that “if a Norwegian bishop were to take part in an Anglican consecration first and not vice versa, this would indicate that mutual recognition had been reached”.¹⁸ This suggestion of Prenter became the conscious model of the CoE, “thus giving a strong signal of mutuality”.¹⁹ Bishops from the Danish, Norwegian, and Icelandic churches have participated in the ordinations of Anglican bishops before Anglican bishops have assisted in the ordinations of western Nordic bishops. Danish bishops have participated in the ordinations of new bishops in most of the church provinces of the Porvoo Communion, thus recognising the catholicity and apostolicity of those local and regional churches – although the catholicity and apostolicity of their own bishops and church province have so far not been sacramentally recognised through mutual ordinations by the united episcopacy of the Evangelic Catholic Church in Northern Europe and beyond.

¹⁵ Hill, ‘E-Mail to the Author’.

¹⁶ Tustin, ‘Links with the Church of Denmark’, p2, §5.

¹⁷ Ibid., p2, §5; Details given by Bishop David Tustin in Wrawby on 18-05-2015. Tustin based his information on his diary from 1997.

¹⁸ Ramsey, *The Church of England and the Churches of Norway, Denmark, and Iceland*, p31.

¹⁹ Tustin, ‘Links with the Church of Denmark’, p2, §5.

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